

Author's response to reviews

Title: UV-visible marker confirms that environmental persistence of Clostridium difficile spores in toilets of patients with C. difficile-associated diarrhea is associated with lack of compliance with cleaning protocol

Authors:

Michelle J. Alfa (malfa@sbgh.mb.ca)
Dueck Christine (cdueck@sbgh.mb.ca)
Olson Nancy (nolson@sbr.ca)
DeGagne Pat (pdegagne@sbgh.mb.ca)
Papetti Selena (spapetti@yahoo.com)
Wald Alana (alanawald@shaw.ca)
Lo Evelyn (elo@sbgh.mb.ca)
Harding Godfrey (gharding@sbgh.mb.ca)

Version: 3 **Date:** 2 April 2008

Author's response to reviews: see over

April 1, 2008

BioMed Central Editor:

Thank-you for your e-mail indicating acceptance, in principle, of our manuscript entitled: "UV-visible marker confirms that environmental persistence of *Clostridium difficile* spores in toilets of patients with *C.difficile*-associated diarrhea is associated with lack of compliance with cleaning protocols."

In response to the reviewers comments we have made the following changes to the manuscript:

1. I suggest to add this reply to the references

RESPONSE: The Wilcox 2004 article has been added to the list of references. In addition a statement has been added to the discussion to reflect this Wilcox reference:

Revised text on page 14, first paragraph:

"Wilcox et al (2004) responded to Dettenkofer's letter to the editor indicating that they did state in their manuscript that there are a number of confounding factors that potentially could have affected their study. Based on our data we would suggest that one of the confounders that may have affected Wilcox's study could be a lack of compliance with the housekeeping protocol."

2. Before we proceed to acceptance, please document in the manuscript the full name of the ethics committee that gave approval for the study. Please also clarify in the manuscript whether (verbal or written) informed consent was obtained.

RESPONSE: The text in the Study Enrolment section has been modified to provide the information requested.

Revised text on page 8, second paragraph:

"Approval for this study was obtained from the University of Manitoba Health Research Ethics Board and the ST. Boniface General Hospital Research Review committee. Informed written consent was obtained from patients enrolled into Arms 1 and 2 of this study. Subsequently, approval for additional studies using the UVM was obtained from the same ethics and research committees to allow toilet monitoring by culture and UVM without written informed consent from patients."

You mentioned that BMC would like to issue a press release about our article. We would be delighted to have the journal issue a press release. We understand it will delay slightly the publication time-frame.

We acknowledge and will pay the processing charge of £722.50 once the article is accepted. Please send an invoice for this processing charge when you determine the article is ready for acceptance.

We trust this addresses all the issues and hope that the article, as revised, is now acceptable for acceptance for publication.

Sincerely yours

Dr. Michelle J. Alfa Ph.D., FCCM
(on behalf of all authors listed)