OPEN PEER REVIEW

Open Peer Review (OPR)

As a new feature for progressing towards transparency, we decided to open a new window for all of our editors as well as authors titled "**Open Peer Review**". We hope by this new facility, our reviewers will be more motivated and authors will be more satisfied with the review process. We believe that publishing our peer review reports could make a transparent and clear environment for all our efforts within a journal, but not all reviewers tend to publish their comments.

What is "Open Peer Review" process?

An "Open Peer Review" process is making the details of all review process (including reviewers, associate editors, and EICs comments) as "Public" as it is agreed by EIC, Authors, and reviewers.

Advantages of "Open Peer Review" process

- More transparency, constructiveness and tactful comments of the peer review process: leads to an increase in the quality of reviews
- More motivations for all involved roles in the review process
- Authors' satisfactions from the review process: Increases honesty between authors and reviewers
- Education of both authors and new students
- Prevents reviewers from following their individual agendas and leading to the detection of reviewers' conflicts of interests

You can find out more at:
https://sites.kowsarpub.com/kowsar/knowledgebase/category/tree.html#opr.html

Jundishapur Journal of Microbiology
Article DOI: 10.5812/jjm.101767
Published in: Jundishapur Journal of Microbiology: 13(8); e101767

Peer Review Report for "Antifungal Susceptibility of Non-*albicans Candida* Species in A Tertiary Care Hospital, Bulgaria"

Author(s): Hristina Yotova Hitkova, Diana Simeonova Georgieva, Preslava Mihailova Hristova, Teodora Vasileva Marinova-Bulgaranova, Biser Kirilov Borisov, Vladimir Georgiev Popov

Review Timeline:

Submit Date: 12 Feb 2020
Revised Date: 28 Sep 2020
Accepted Date: 30 Sep 2020

Revision (0)

Here, you can see the **Reviewers**, **Associate Editors** and **EICs'** comments from the beginning to the end of the revision process.

Hossein Zarrinfar: Reviewer | **Revision** (0) 23 Feb 2020

Dear AE,
In the manuscript entitled "Antifungal susceptibility of non-albicans Candida species at a Tertiary Care Hospital in Bulgaria" (ID: 101767).
The authors have described the Antifungal susceptibility of non-albicans Candida species. This manuscript is interesting and educational. By the way, there are some grammatical and spelling errors in English too that should be corrected by a person expert. Thus, it may need a minor revision.
Title: It is better: Antifungal susceptibility of non-albicans Candida species in a Tertiary Care Hospital, Bulgaria
Abstract:
1. Candida should be Italic in the text.
2. Method section is unclear. It needs information about a number of Candida species with their names.
3. The last sentence in the conclusion section is unclear and needs a revision.
Background:
1. “This is a consequence of the frequent usage of broad-spectrum antibiotics, admission to

… chemotherapy, immunosuppression, etc", this needs another new related reference, please add it: Rapid detection of Candida species in bronchoalveolar lavage fluid from patients with pulmonary symptoms. Braz J Microbiol. 2016; 47(1): 172-6.
2. "Emerging NAC such as C. glabrata, C. parapsilosis, C. tropicalis, and C. krusei can cause …. infection sites and geography regions", this needs another new related reference, please add it: High prevalence of candiduria due to non-albicans Candida species among diabetic patients: a matter of concern? J Clin Lab Anal. 2018; 32: e22343.
3. "As is well known, NAC has reduced sensitivity to clinically relevant antifungal agents due to intrinsic or acquired resistance", this needs new related references, please add it: a. Molecular Identification, Genotypic Diversity, Antifungal Susceptibility, and Clinical Outcomes of Infections Caused by Clinically Underrated Yeasts, Candida orthopsilosis, and Candida metapsilosis: An Iranian Multicenter Study (2014–2019). Front. Cell. Infect. Microbiol. 2019; 9:264. b. Antifungal susceptibility, genotyping, resistance mechanism, and clinical profile of Candida tropicalis blood isolates. Medical Mycology; November 2019, DOI: 10.1093/mmy/myz124.
Methods:
1. Did no clinical specimen contain two Candida species? "Other materials" what means? Didn't have any information?
2. Please replace "specimen" instead of "material or sample".
3. Please mention the concentration range of drugs used in each row (highest and lowest).
4. Did you use the resistant and susceptible criteria according to reference 14 completely?
5. "according to the manufacturer's instruction", what means? Which company and for which item?
6. The abbreviation of the antifungals should be used after the first name in the text completely.
7. "Multidrug resistance was defined as simultaneous resistance to ≥1 agent in two or more classes of antifungal agents", is unclear and needs a revision.
Results:
1. "The data for the other NAC isolates showed that the MICs of echinocandins were within the S breakpoints in almost all NAC (Tables 2 and 3)", is unclear and needs a revision.
Discussion:
1. "Overall 13 species were determined as C. glabrata was most common, followed by C. tropicalis, C. krusei, and C. parapsilosis." the sentence is unclear and needs a revision.
2. "et al." to be Italic in the text.
3. "Azevedo et al. [11] found decreased susceptibility to fluconazole in about 70% of overall 54 C. krusei strains, in contrast to more than 80% resistance usually reported.", the sentence is unclear and needs a revision.
4. "Of particular interest was the detection of 6 (8.95%) multidrug-resistant isolates in our study." the sentence is unclear and needs a revision.
5. Table 2, "Antifungal agents (MIC ranges in µg/L)", L what means???
6. Table 4, "Multidrug-resistant non-albicans Candida isolates (n=6)", "(n=6)" to be omitted.
7. Table 4, is the resistant criteria according to reference 14?
thanks.

REFEREE: Reviewer | **Revision** (0) 17 May 2020

Dear AE,
There are some comments which should be addressed by the author:
- The status of the code of ethics is unclear, Please include the ethics number in the manuscript.
- Patients' samples were collected from which hospital wards?
- Please, Mention the company name and country of the Antifungal drug manufacturer.
- Please, Update references.
Thanks.

REFEREE: Associate Editor | **Revision** (0) 27 Aug 2020

Dear EIC
The reviewer(s) have recommended publication, but also suggest some minor revisions to the manuscript. Therefore, I invite the author to respond to the reviewer(s)' comments and revise his manuscript.
Kind regards,

REFEREE: EIC | **Revision** (0) 2 Sep 2020

Dear Author,
Thank you for submitting your manuscript to JJM. I have completed the review of your manuscript and a summary is appended below (Pleases find attached files). The reviewers recommend the reconsideration of your paper following major revision. I invite you to resubmit your manuscript after addressing all reviewer comments. Please answer point by point to reviewer's comments on a separate sheet under WORD format and write your modifications in the revised version (WORD format) in colored or highlighted letters. Your answers to reviewers' queries are not only for the Editorial Board but for the readers and should be included, when appropriate, in the manuscript for improvement and a better understanding.
When resubmitting your manuscript, please carefully consider all issues mentioned in the reviewers' comments, outline every change made a point by point, and provide suitable rebuttals for any comments not addressed. In addition, JJM INSTRUCTION attached to the mail, Pleases find it.
Note:
Please add ORCID number into you and your collages account, then automatically appear in your published papers in JJM both in HTML and pdf. Pleases follow the below link for the process. http://single.demo.pub/en/knowledgebase/category/tree.html#orcid.html
Thanks.

OPEN PEER REVIEW

Revision (1)

Reply to Reviewers

Ideally, the reviewing process can significantly improve the submitted manuscripts by allowing the authors to take into account the advice of reviewers. Author(s) must reply to all reviewers' comments in a separate Word file, point by point. A "**Reply to Reviewers**" document is submitted along with revised manuscript during submission of revised files, summarizing the changes that the authors made in response to the reviewers' comments. The responses to reviewers' comments specifies how the authors addressed each comment the reviewers made.

You can read the authors' responses to the reviewers' comments in the next page.

Dear Associate Editor 1,

First of all, I would like to thank you for possibility to publish our manuscript in JJM. We carefully considered all issues mentioned in the reviewers' comments and tried to fix some problems in grammar and punctuation.

Sincerely yours:
Assoc. prof. Hristina Hitkova

Dear Reviewer 1,

I would like to thank you for your valuable notes concerning our manuscript.

According to your comments:

Title: Yes, it is better to be: Antifungal susceptibility of non-*albicans Candida* species in a Tertiary Care Hospital, Bulgaria

Abstract:

1. Candida should be Italic in the text – Yes, of course. It was performed in italic, but it is changed in the frame of submission. To solve this problem, I am sending the abstract together with the full text.
2. Method section is unclear. It needs information about number of *Candida* species with their names – Yes, we completed this section.

3. The last sentence in conclusion section is unclear and needs a revision – Yes, we rewrote the mention sentence.

Background: Yes, thank you very mach. We added all recommended references.

Methods:

1. Did no clinical specimen contain two Candida species? “Other materials” what means? Didn't have any information? – There were not clinical specimens containing two *Candida* species. Other materials are ear swabs (3) and central venous catheter (1).
2. Please replace “specimen” instead of “material or sample” – OK!

3. Please mention the concentration range of drugs used in each row (highest and lowest). OK!

4. Did you use the resistant and susceptible criteria according to reference 14 completely – Yes, but not completely, because there are not criteria for 5-fluorocytosine (FCY).

5. “according to the manufacturer’s instruction”, what means? Which company and for which item? – The interpretation of results for FCY was performed according to the manufacturer’s instruction (Micronaut-AM, *Merlin Diagnostika GmbH, Germany*)

6. The abbreviation of the antifungals should be used after first name in the text completely. – Indeed it is, but only fluconazole is mentioned ones in the background before introduction of all abbreviations. We used antifungal abbreviations only in methods and Tables 2,3,4.

7. "Multidrug resistance was defined as simultaneous resistance to ≥1 agent in two or more classes of antifungal agents", is unclear and needs a revision.

We accepted this definition from the following reference: Arendrup MC, Patterson TF. Multidrug-resistant *Candida*: epidemiology, molecular mechanisms, and treatment. *J Infect Dis*. 2017;**216**(Suppl_3**)**:S445–51. doi: 10.1093/infdis/jix131. [PubMed: 28911043] → „On this background and in absence of a standard definition for MDR *Candida*, we defined MDR as an isolate nonsusceptible to ≥1 agent in ≥2 drug classes and XDR as an isolate nonsusceptible to ≥1 agent in ≥3 drug classes".

Results: "The data for the other NAC isolates showed that the MICs of echinocandins were within the S breakpoints in almost all NAC (Tables 2 and 3)", is unclear and needs a revision – Yes, we rewrote the mention sentence.

***Discussion*:**

1. "Overall 13 species were determined as C. glabrata was most common, followed by C. tropicalis, C. krusei and C. parapsilosis." the sentence is unclear and needs a revision. - Yes, we rewrote the mention sentence.
2. "et al." to be Italic in the text. – Yes, of course.

3. "Azevedo et al. [11] found decreased susceptibility to fluconazole in about 70% of overall 54 *C. krusei* strains, in contrast to more than 80% resistance usually reported.", the sentence is unclear and needs a revision. – Yes, we rewrote this sentence.

4. "Of particular interest was detection of 6 (8.95%) multidrug resistant isolates in our study." the sentence is unclear and needs a revision. – Yes, we rewrote this sentence.

5. Table 2, "Antifungal agents (MIC ranges in µg/L)", L what means??? – I am sorry, it is our mistake – should be MIC ranges in µg/mL)

6. Table 4, "Multidrug resistant non-*albicans Candida* isolates (n=6)", "(n=6)" to be omitted – OK!

7. Table 4, is the resistant criteria according to reference 14? – Yes.

I am truly thankful for your revision.

Sincerely yours:
Assoc. prof. Hristina Hitkova

Dear Reviewer 2,

Many thanks for your revision.

1. The status of the code of ethics is unclear, Please include the ethics number in the manuscript. – All patients gave written informed consent in accordance with the ethical committee of our hospital.
2. Patients' samples were collected from which hospital wards? – Patients' samples were collected from the intensive care unit (28), urology (9), surgery (8), hematology (7), oncology (7), nephrology (4) and pediatrics(4)

3. Please, Mention the company name and country of the Antifungal drug manufacturer. – Yes. We mentioned it in the text (section methods) - Micronaut-AM, *Merlin Diagnostika GmbH, Germany*):
4. Please, Update references. – Yes, thank you. We updated our references.

Sincerely yours:
Assoc. prof. Hristina Hitkova

OPEN PEER REVIEW

Revision (1)

Here, you can see the **Reviewers**, **Associate Editors** and **EICs'** comments from the beginning to the end of the revision process.

REFEREE: EIC | **Revision (1)** 30 Sep 2020

Dear Authors,
According to the associated editor report, your manuscript is accepted for publishing in JJM and send to the publisher for the next process.
Note:
Please add ORCID number into you and your collages account, then automatically appear in your published papers in JJM both in HTML and pdf.
Thanks.