

July 23, 2021

Dear Editor-in-chief,

Please find enclosed our edited manuscript in Word format for our Original Article No 67663. We thank the Reviewers for their constructive criticism. Their concerns and suggestions have been addressed thoroughly.

The manuscript has been improved according to the suggestions of the Reviewers, and every one of the points of the Reviewers has been addressed below in a point-by-point manner.

Title: “Did the severe acute respiratory syndrome-coronavirus 2 pandemic cause an endemic *Clostridium difficile* infection?”

Authors: Camelia Cojocariu, Irina Girleanu, Anca Trifan, Andrei Olteanu, Cristina Muzica, Laura Huiban, Stefan Chiriac, Ana Maria Singeap, Tudor Cuciureanu, Catalin Sfarti, Carol Stanciu

Name of Journal: *World Journal of Clinical Cases*

REVIEWER 1

Comments

General comment: A very interesting study. Generally, the paper is well written and easy to read. Nevertheless, amendments need to be done! Thank you for your work! Title: Clear and adequate for the content. Tables: Clear and informative. English: Meaning is conveyed, but grammar, spelling, and punctuation errors need to be corrected. Structure: Well organized. Scientific quality rating This paper presents an original study. The study results are important, and they are likely to be cited. Abstract Clear but it needs amendments. Keywords: reflect the content. Introduction: Very informative. You did a great job. Thank you. Methods: Clear and well explained! Results: Well explained Discussion: Clear but it needs to be more developed. Amendments are required. Conclusion: Related to the aims of the work. References: Well listed. Thank you for your work!

Answer: *Thank you for the positive comments for our manuscript. As suggested, we have addressed the grammar, spelling, and punctuation errors by using an English Editing Service.*

SCIENCE EDITOR

Comments

1 Scientific quality This is an original observational article Clostridium Difficile infection; Classification: Grade C and B; Summarization of the Peer-Review Report: According to the authors hospitalizations, antibiotic use, alcohol consumption represents risk factors for CDI development in patients aged more than 60 years-old from the urban area with past history of COVID-19 patients. There are several limitations that should be addressed as reported by the reviewers. In fact, the methodology is unclear. A reference should be added justifying the criteria used for diagnosing CDI. Why was this study period chosen?

Answer: *Thank you for your constructive criticism. As you suggested, we provided details within the text on the criteria used for diagnosing CDI and, also, the reason why this study period was chosen (Please see page 6 last sentence and page 7 first sentence).*

Format: There are 2 tables (good quality). References: References are quite representative of the text and 3 out of 31 are self-citations of the authors (7, 8, 27). I suggest adding some references related to international guidelines.

Answer: *We have corrected and added some references related to international guidelines (Please see reference 7 and 8)*

Language evaluation The authors provided a B2 certificate. This is not appropriate and does not correspond to what is required. Authors must improve the language and attach a professional certificate Academic norms and rules Approval of the study is not clear. Please add an English-language certificate.

Answer: *We have addressed this issue by using a Language Editing Service. Please find enclosed the Editing Certificate.*

There is no misconduct The biostatistician's certificate has been reported but not in the proper language

Answer: *Please find enclosed the biostatistician's certificate drafted in English.*

The STROBE guidelines must be added in the text with the proper reference

Answer: *Please find the STROBE Statement at Page 19.*

Supplementary comments Invited Manuscript; No funding Issues raised The title must be modified. Why Clostridioides?

Answer: *We modified the title as suggested, by replacing "Clostridioides" with "Clostridium"*

Approval of the study is not reported (necessary, contrary to what the authors stated)

Answer: *We have addressed this issue, please see page 19 - Institutional review board statement*

The discussion must be shortened and the limitations of the study are not reported. Informed consent is just a template.

Answer: *We have revised the Discussion, and also provided the limitation of our study (please see page 11, second paragraph).*

We are indeed thankful for providing us with valuable reviewers.

Sincerely yours,

Anca Trifan, MD, FRCP

Professor, Department of Gastroenterology

“Gr. T. Popa” University of Medicine and Pharmacy, Iasi, Romania

Institute of Gastroenterology and Hepatology

“St Spiridon” Emergency Hospital, Iasi, Romania

ancatrifan@yahoo.com