



Director of IHU Méditerranée Infection: Prof. Didier Raoult

Clinical Infectious Diseases
The Editor-in-Chief

Marseille, February 8, 2021

Dear Editor-in-Chief,

We are submitting to the *Clinical Infectious Diseases* an article entitled “**Point-of-care diagnosis of COVID-19 at IHU Méditerranée Infection, Marseille, France**” for the supplement CLINID 2020-03.

In order to face the wave of COVID-19 diagnosis by RT-PCR, the IHU Méditerranée Infection deployed point-of-care laboratories to complement to the core-laboratory. We upgraded previously implanted POC by extending their position close to patients and doctors in emergency rooms, adapting instruments and protocols to speed up diagnosis, and ensuring sampling and manipulations to limit contamination of operators and samples. From April to November 2020, 31,087 RT-PCR tests have been performed in POCs for 25,336 different patients; with an overall positivity of 19.5% with a mean delay of the result of 1h26min +/- 23 min. In particular, deploying protected cabins with last generation thermocyclers proved effective in limiting environmental contamination by the viral RNA, preventing contamination of operator and while providing results within 01h02min +/- 6 min. The experience reported here with rapid POC diagnosis of COVID-19 could be worth transposition into similar massive epidemic situations and regular microbiological surveys of at-risk populations.

This manuscript has been edited by a native English speaker. All of the authors have seen and approved the manuscript and contributed significantly to the work. The manuscript has not been previously published nor is not being considered for publication elsewhere.

We hope that you will find this manuscript of interest for this special issue.

Yours sincerely,

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