

## PEER REVIEW HISTORY

BMJ Open publishes all reviews undertaken for accepted manuscripts. Reviewers are asked to complete a checklist review form (<http://bmjopen.bmj.com/site/about/resources/checklist.pdf>) and are provided with free text boxes to elaborate on their assessment. These free text comments are reproduced below.

### ARTICLE DETAILS

<b>TITLE (PROVISIONAL)</b>	Acute Watery Diarrhea Cases During Cholera Outbreak in Syria: A Cohort Study
<b>AUTHORS</b>	Arnaout, Ahmad; Nerabani, Yaman; Sawas, Mohamad Nabhan; Alhejazi, Tala; Farho, M. Ali; Arnaout, Khaled; Alshaker, Hassan; Shebli, Baraa; Helou, Mostafa; Mobaied, Bashir Badawi; Mouti, Mohamad Bassel; Kady, Fares; Aljarad, Ziad; AUH Team, Aleppo University Hospital Team

### VERSION 1 – REVIEW

<b>REVIEWER</b>	Bwire, Godfrey Republic of Uganda Ministry of Health, Intergrated Epidemiology, Surveillance and Public Health Emergencies
<b>REVIEW RETURNED</b>	19-Jan-2024

<b>GENERAL COMMENTS</b>	<p>This is a well written manuscript of a study on acute water diarrheal (AWD) outbreak in Syria. The cases were admitted to Aleppo University Hospital during the timeframe of September 20th, 2022, to October 20th, 2022. The authors, Arnaout et al, carried out a comprehensive analysis of data collected during non-interventional observational research on AWD outbreak in Syria. The main outcome of the study was 38.7% of patients suffered from serious complications, and the most frequent complications were mainly electrolyte imbalance (28.2%) and severe dehydration (16.3%). Moreover, complications such as acute kidney injury, volume shock, and hypoglycemia happened in only small proportions. These are important findings and surely, they make a good record of the AWD outbreak in Siria. however, as rightly pointed out by the authors in conclusion (Page 7, lines 243-244) the finding were similar to those of previously published studies on AWD outbreaks in developing countries such as Yemen, Nigeria, and Lebanon. Hence, though the study is comprehensive and well written it add on the existing on the subject.</p>
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<b>REVIEWER</b>	Gupta, Ginisha Clinton Health Access Initiative
<b>REVIEW RETURNED</b>	30-Jan-2024

<b>GENERAL COMMENTS</b>	<p>Well written manuscript. A few minor comments for improvement:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Discuss/describe in brief the limitations of the study.</li><li>2. Discuss/describe the different statistical analysis used in the study - particularly in Table 1.</li><li>3. Mean, standard deviation is mentioned in the methods but there is no result to support the same. Please add results to support the methodology.</li></ol>
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<b>REVIEWER</b>	Kundu, Satyajit Patuakhali Science and Technology University, Biochemistry and Food Analysis
<b>REVIEW RETURNED</b>	09-Mar-2024

<b>GENERAL COMMENTS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- My specific comments are below:</li> <li>- The conclusion of the abstract should be based on the findings of this study. That could be any recommendation based on the potential sources of infection of AWD.</li> <li>- The first bullet point of strengths and limitations is not a strength. The prospective follow-up design of this study could be a strength.</li> <li>- Among the 4 bullet points, I didn't find any limitations. You should mention some limitations of your study too.</li> <li>- The introduction should be enriched with some existing literature. You should do the literature review vigorously and cite the appropriate references, then you should go for the problem statement and justification of your study that why doing this study is so important.</li> <li>- - line 81-83, need reference.</li> <li>- You need to cite the references based on the statement you pick from other sources. You will not cite after the paragraph at a time.</li> <li>- Is there any references for line 111 - 117.</li> <li>- I am confused about the study design of the study. In cohort study, you need to go for the follow-up and also you can calculate the incidence rate along with the prevalence. The description regarding the study design and follow-up data collection is not clear. If you have different round follow-up data. you can do an analytical study rather than doing a complete descriptive overview.</li> <li>- Detailed strengths and limitations should be described at the end of the discussion.</li> </ul>
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### **VERSION 1 – AUTHOR RESPONSE**

Response to Reviewer 1:

Thank you for your positive feedback on our manuscript regarding the study on the acute watery diarrheal (AWD) outbreak in Syria. We appreciate your acknowledgment of the comprehensive analysis we conducted on the data collected during the observational research.

Response to Reviewer 2:

Thank you for your valuable feedback on our manuscript. We will make the necessary revisions as suggested:

1. We included a discussion on the limitations of our study in the Discussion section to provide a comprehensive overview of the scope and implications of our research.
2. We described the statistical analysis methods used in the study, particularly in Table 1, to provide clarity and transparency on the analytical approach undertaken.
3. We edited that statistical method section.

Response to Reviewer 3:

Thank you for your detailed feedback on our manuscript. We appreciate your insightful comments and suggestions for improving the clarity, structure, and robustness of our study. We will address each of your specific comments as follows:

1. We revised the conclusion of the abstract to align more closely with the findings of our study and included recommendations based on our study.

2. We included a discussion on the limitations of our study in the Discussion section to provide a comprehensive overview of the scope and implications of our research.
3. We explained the importance of the research and the gap in the medical literature in the introduction and modified some paragraphs.
4. We did not find a source for the first two lines of the introduction because they are general, aggregate information.
5. The study did not calculate the prevalence, but rather the incidence, which is consistent with the cohort study. However, the study also reflected some of the main characteristics of patients that are also considered important, such as management, patients' condition upon admission, and laboratory values.
6. Detailed strengths and limitations were elaborated upon in the discussion section to offer a comprehensive assessment of our study.