Dear Sir,

We consider that Smith [1] and his colleagues have produced a very practical guide to the minimum standards for food handler suitability and activities in food businesses. Within our business, the advice aligns very closely with our present approach and is a useful confirmation of best practice across the food industry.

We would like to point out a difference in the advice from that currently recommended by the Health Protection Agency, specifically from a working group of the former Public Health Laboratory Service Advisory Committee on Gastrointestinal Infections [2] and the Code of Practice. For *Shigella*, the current advice recommends that cases of *Shigella sonnei* are excluded for 48 h after first normal stool. For *Shigella dysenteriae*, *Shigella flexneri* and *Shigella boydii* (risk groups A and D), exclusion should be until two negative faecal specimens, taken at intervals not less than 48 h, have been confirmed.

It is likely that Smith and colleagues did not have access to the latest advice at the time of producing the guidance, relying instead on the previous advice published in October 1995 [3].

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References