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The epidemiological characteristics of pediatric *Streptococcus pneumoniae* isolated from inpatients and outpatients at Beijing Children's Hospital

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Abstract

Background: The epidemiological data of *Streptococcus pneumoniae* isolates are important for the practice of treatment and prevention. This research aimed to explore the epidemiological characteristics of pediatric *S. pneumoniae* isolated from outpatients and inpatients.

Methods: *S. pneumoniae* were isolated from unsterile samples of inpatients and outpatients younger than five years old between March 2013 and February 2014. The serotypes were determined by diagnostic pneumococcal antisera, and resistance against 13 antibiotics was tested by either the E-test or the disc diffusion method. The sequence types (STs) were analyzed with multilocus sequence typing (MLST).

Results: The five dominant serotypes obtained from inpatients were 19F(32.9%), 19A(20.7%), 23F(10.7%), 6A(10.0%), and 14 (8.6%), while those in the outpatients were 19F (13.6%), 23F (12.9%), 6A (10.0%), 6B (10.0%), and 19A (7.9%). The coverage rates of the 7-, 10- and 13-valent pneumococcal vaccine formulations were high. The non-susceptibility to penicillin, cefuroxime, imipenem, erythromycin, and trimethoprim-sulfamethoxazole among the inpatient isolates were 7.1%, 92.8%, 65.7%, 100%, and 85.0%, respectively, while those among the outpatient isolates were 0.7%, 50.0%, 38.6%, 96.4%, and 65.7%, respectively. There were 45 and 81 STs detected from the pneumococci isolated from inpatients and outpatients, respectively. CC271 was more prevalent in inpatients.

Conclusions: The pneumococcal vaccine related serotypes were still prevalent either in inpatient department or in outpatient department, which with serious antibiotic resistance.

38 These results might be helpful for understanding the epidemiology of *S. pneumoniae* in
39 Beijing. PCVs can prevent vaccine related serotypes. Therefore, universal immunization of
40 PCVs should be implemented to prevent the spread of vaccine related serotypes of

41 *S. pneumoniae*.

42 **Key words:** *Streptococcus pneumoniae*, serotype distribution, antibiotic
43 resistance, multilocus sequence typing

44

45 **Background**

46 *Streptococcus pneumoniae* (*S. pneumoniae*) is a major pathogen of infectious diseases
47 worldwide. The epidemiological data of invasive *S. pneumoniae* isolates are important for the
48 practice of treatment and prevention. However, it is hard to collect an adequate number of
49 isolates in countries where the rate of positive bacteria cultures from invasive samples are
50 very low. We collected 171 invasive pneumococcal isolates from 11 hospitals between 2006
51 and 2008 [1]. On average, only 5.2 isolates are collected in each hospital every year, which
52 limits the representation of this pathogen in these regions. The Centers for Disease Control
53 and Prevention (CDC) and the World Health Organization (WHO) recommended that
54 nasopharyngeal isolates could be used for the surveillance of pneumococcal epidemiology
55 since they could be obtained in higher number [2,3]. However, in Chinese hospitals, the
56 nasopharyngeal swab collection is not a regular work and is only used for some research
57 projects. Such collection will be stopped when the project is finished. In China and other
58 developing countries, etiologic examination is usually performed to inpatients. Therefore, the
59 bacterial culturing of sputum (i.e., laryngohypopharynx aspirates) and bronchoalveolar lavage
60 can be continuously obtained in the daily clinical work at the inpatient department, which is
61 an important facilitating condition for continuous surveillance.

62 In our two previous studies, higher drug resistance and an increased 7-valent pneumococcal
63 conjugate vaccine (PCV7) related serotype coverage rate were found in isolates from the
64 hypopharyngeal aspirates of inpatients with pneumonia than those of nasopharyngeal isolates
65 from nasopharyngeal swabs of outpatients with an upper respiratory infection [4,5]. However,
66 the two studies were not completed during the same period. The exact epidemiological
67 characteristics of *S. pneumoniae* isolated from pediatric inpatients and outpatients in the same
68 period could not be found in previous reports.

69 In the present study, clinical non-invasive *S. pneumoniae* isolates from inpatients and
70 nasopharyngeal carriage isolates from outpatients visiting Beijing Children's Hospital were
71 collected between March 2013 and February 2014. The serotype distribution, PCV coverage
72 rate, antimicrobial resistance, and MLST were analyzed for these two groups.

73 **Methods**

74 The current study cohort was composed of the children younger than 5 years old in Beijing
75 Children's Hospital between March 2013 and February 2014. Inpatients were children with
76 pneumonia who were admitted into the Infectious Diseases Department, the Respiratory
77 Diseases Department, and the Intensive Care Unit. Outpatients were children who visited the

78 Outpatient Department with a respiratory infection.

79 This research was approved by the Ethics Committee of Beijing Children's Hospital. We
80 confirm that all research was performed in accordance with relevant guidelines, and the
81 informed consent was obtained from their legal guardians. Meanwhile, this research was
82 performed in accordance with the Declaration of Helsinki.

83 All the inpatient isolates were cultured in a clinical laboratory following a procedure
84 similar to succedent annotation [6]. The isolates were transported to the Microbial Laboratory
85 for further tests. For the outpatients, nasopharyngeal swabs were collected and immediately
86 transported to the Microbial Laboratory. The samples were inoculated within 3–4h onto
87 tryptone soy agar plates with 5% sheep blood containing 5g/ml gentamicin. The plates were
88 incubated at 35°C under a 5% CO₂ atmosphere and examined after 18–24 h. Using the
89 random number table method, arbitrary outpatient isolates were selected monthly to
90 correspond to the same number of inpatient isolates.

91 As previously described in detail [6], all the isolates were identified based on the typical
92 colony morphology, Gram staining, an optochin sensitivity test (Oxoid Company, Britain),
93 and an Omni serum assay (Statens Serum Institut, Copenhagen, Denmark). All isolates were
94 stored at –80°C in freezing tubes for further study. Only one isolate from each participant was
95 included in the present study.

96 As previously described in detail [6], the serogroups were tested using the Quellung
97 reaction with Pneumotest kits, and the serotypes were tested with factor antisera (Statens
98 Serum Institute, Copenhagen, Denmark). The interpretation of the serotyping depended on the
99 capsular swelling under phase-contrast microscopy with an oil immersion lens (magnification,
100 100×) as described in the literature [7]. The serotype coverage rates of the PCV7, PCV10, and
101 PCV13 were estimated by calculating the percentage of isolates that expressed the serotypes
102 included in the vaccines.

103 For all isolates, the minimum inhibitory concentrations (MICs) were determined against
104 penicillin, erythromycin, amoxicillin-clavulanic acid, cefaclor, cefuroxime, ceftriaxone,
105 levofloxacin, linezolid, vancomycin and imipenem using E-test strips (BIOMERIEUX,
106 France), and the antimicrobial susceptibilities to chloramphenicol, tetracycline and
107 trimethoprim-sulfamethoxazole were determined using the Kirby-Bauer disk diffusion test
108 (OXOID Company, Britain). The Clinical and Laboratory Standards Institute's (CLSI) 2015
109 criteria for MICs were applied to classify isolates as susceptible, intermediate, or resistant [8].
110 As previously described in detail [6], the *S. pneumoniae* American Type Culture Collection
111 strain 49619 (ATCC 49619) was used as a quality control strain and was included in each set
112 of tests to ensure the accuracy of the results. Multi-drug resistant *S. pneumoniae* (MDRSP)
113 were defined as resistant to three or more classes of antibiotics tested in this study.

114 The housekeeping genes *aroE*, *gdh*, *gki*, *recP*, *spi*, *xpt*, and *ddl* were amplified via
115 polymerase chain reaction (PCR) [9]. The sequences of seven loci were each compared with
116 those of all known alleles at the loci as well as with the STs in the database of the
117 pneumococcal MLST website (<https://pubmlst.org/spneumoniae>). New allelic numbers or
118 new ST numbers were assigned by the curator of the pneumococcal MLST website [10].
119 eBURST v3 software (<https://eburst.mlst.net/>) was used to investigate the relationships
120 between the isolates and to assign a clonal complex (CC) based on the stringent group

121 definition of six out of seven shared alleles. STs that shared six identical alleles among the
122 seven MLST loci with another ST in the group were reclassified into one group as a CC.

123 **Ethics approval and consent to participate**

124 A parent or legal guardian of each participant signed a written informed consent document
125 before enrollment and before any study procedure was performed. This study was reviewed
126 and approved by the Ethics Committee at Beijing Children's Hospital Affiliated to Capital
127 Medical University. Ethical problems were not encountered in this study.

128 **Statistical analysis**

129 The antimicrobial resistance data was collected and analyzed using WHONET 5.6 software as
130 recommended by the WHO, and the serotype data was collected and analyzed by Excel 2017.

131 **Results**

132 During the study period, 140 *S. pneumoniae* isolates were collected from inpatients which
133 were cultured from hypopharyngeal aspirates (n=104), bronchoalveolar lavage (n=33),
134 nasopharyngeal swabs (n=1) or ear discharge (n=2). Of the 693 pneumococcal strains isolated
135 from outpatients, 140 were randomly selected using random number table method.

136 **Serotype distribution and Vaccine coverage**

137 The serotype distribution and vaccine coverage between the inpatient and outpatient *S.*
138 *pneumoniae* isolates are shown in Table 1. The serotype was included in the table when its
139 constituent ratio was greater than 5%. The serotype distribution was more concentrated
140 among the inpatient isolates, in which only 15 serotypes were identified. The most common
141 serotypes were 19F (32.9%), 19A (20.7%), 23F (10.7%), 6A (10.0%), 14 (8.6%) and 15B
142 (6.4%), which accounted for 89.3%. Meanwhile, 29 serotypes were identified among the
143 outpatient isolates. The most frequent serotypes were 19F (13.6%), 23F (12.9%), 6A (10.0%),
144 6B (10.0%), 19A (7.9%) and 34 (5.0%), which accounted for 59.3%. In addition, the serotype
145 coverage rates of PCVs among the inpatient isolates were high.

146
147 **Table 1. Serotype distribution and vaccines coverage rates of inpatient and outpatient *S. pneumoniae***

148 **isolates [n (%)]**

Serotype / coverage rate	Inpatient isolates (n=140)	Outpatient isolates (n=140)
19F	46 (32.9%)	19 (13.6%)
23F	15 (10.7%)	18 (12.9%)
14	12 (8.6%)	5 (3.6%)
6B	4 (2.9%)	14 (10.0%)

9V	1 (0.7%)	0
18C	0	1 (0.7%)
7F	1 (0.7%)	1 (0.7%)
19A	29 (20.7%)	11 (7.9%)
6A	14 (10.0%)	14 (10.0%)
3	1 (0.7%)	3 (2.1%)
15B	9 (6.4%)	5 (3.6%)
34	0	7 (5.0%)
Others	8 (5.7%) ^a	42 (30.0%) ^b
PCV7	78 (55.7%)	57 (40.7%)
PCV10	79 (56.4%)	58 (41.4%)
PCV13	123 (87.9%)	86 (61.4%)

149 Notes: ^a: the other types include serotypes 15C (2), 6C (2), 42 (1), 22F (1), and 15F (1); ^b: the other types
150 include serotypes 6C (5), 23A (5), 15C (4), 42 (4), 15A (4), 11A (4), 29 (3), 22F (2), 13 (2), 20 (1), 23B (1),
151 8 (1), 24 (1), 31 (1), 19B (1), 11B (1), 10A (1), and 7C (1).

152 Antimicrobial Susceptibility Testing

153 The antimicrobial susceptibilities of the inpatient and outpatient isolates are shown in Table
154 2. The non-susceptibility rate of penicillin in inpatients was high, and the penicillin MIC₅₀ and
155 MIC₉₀ values were also higher. Among the inpatient isolates, the non-susceptibility rate of
156 amoxicillin-clavulanic acid, imipenem, cefuroxime, cefaclor and
157 trimethoprim-sulfamethoxazole were 7.1%, 65.7%, 92.8%, 93.6% and 85%, respectively. The
158 corresponding date were 0.7%, 38.6%, 50%, 53.5% and 65.7%, respectively. All of the
159 isolates showed high non-susceptibility to erythromycin and tetracycline. The resistant rate of
160 chloramphenicol was low both in inpatient isolates and outpatient isolates. All pneumococcal
161 isolates were susceptible to vancomycin, linezolid and levofloxacin.

162
163 **Table 2. Susceptibility and MICs to 13 antibiotics of inpatient and outpatient *S. pneumoniae* isolates**

Antimicrobial ^a	Inpatient isolates (n=140)	Outpatient isolates (n=140)
Penicillin		
Parenteral non-meningitis		
R%	2.1	0.7
I%	5	0
Oral non-meningitis		
R%	40.0	20.7
I%	54.3	38.6
MIC range (mg/L)	0.016-12	0.004-6
MIC ₅₀ (mg/L)	1	0.5
MIC ₉₀ (mg/L)	2	1.5
Amoxicillin-clavulanic acid		
R%	0.7	0
I%	6.4	0.7

MIC range (mg/L)	0.016-12	0.016-3
MIC ₅₀ (mg/L)	1	0.38
MIC ₉₀ (mg/L)	2	1.5
Cefuroxime		
R%	87.1	43.6
I%	5.7	6.4
MIC range (mg/L)	0.023-48	0.016-12
MIC ₅₀ (mg/L)	3	0.5
MIC ₉₀ (mg/L)	8	4
Cefaclor		
R%	90.7	51.4
I%	2.9	2.1
MIC range (mg/L)	0.19->256	0.125->256
MIC ₅₀ (mg/L)	24	3
MIC ₉₀ (mg/L)	64	96
Ceftriaxone		
R%	1.4	0.7
I%	17.9	10.7
MIC range (mg/L)	0.012-4	0.006-3
MIC ₅₀ (mg/L)	0.75	0.38
MIC ₉₀ (mg/L)	1.5	1.5
Imipenem		
R%	0.7	0
I%	65	38.6
MIC range (mg/L)	0.008-2	0.004-0.38
MIC ₅₀ (mg/L)	0.19	0.094
MIC ₉₀ (mg/L)	0.25	0.25
Vancomycin		
MIC range (mg/L)	0.19-0.5	0.25-1
MIC ₅₀ (mg/L)	0.5	0.5
MIC ₉₀ (mg/L)	0.5	0.5
Linezolid		
MIC range (mg/L)	0.38-2	0.25-2
MIC ₅₀ (mg/L)	0.75	1
MIC ₉₀ (mg/L)	1	1.5
Levofloxacin		
MIC range (mg/L)	0.38-2	0.38-2
MIC ₅₀ (mg/L)	0.75	0.75
MIC ₉₀ (mg/L)	1	1
Erythromycin		
R%	100	96.4
MIC range (mg/L)	4->256	0.094-256
MIC ₅₀ (mg/L)	>256	>256
MIC ₉₀ (mg/L)	>256	>256
Tetracycline		
R%	92.9	93.6
I%	4.2	1.4
Chloramphenicol		
R%	4.3	10.7
Trimethoprim-sulfamethoxazole		
R%	85	65.7
I%	2.1	11.4

164

Notes:

165

^a: The breakpoint of penicillin was based on the parenteral non-meningitis (intermediate [4mg/L],

166 resistant [$\geq 8\text{mg/L}$]), and oral non-meningitis (intermediate [$0.12\text{-}1\text{mg/L}$], resistant [$\geq 2\text{mg/L}$]). The
 167 breakpoint of ceftriaxone was based on only parenteral non-meningitis(intermediate [2mg/L], resistant
 168 [$\geq 4\text{mg/L}$]).

169

170 The multi-drug resistant pattern of the pneumococcal isolates is shown in the Table 3.
 171 Approximately 92.1% (129/140) of all inpatient isolates and 85.0% (119/140) of all outpatient
 172 isolates were MDRSP. The most prevalent antibiotic resistant pattern of
 173 macrolides/ β -lactams/tetracyclines/sulfonamides was observed both in inpatient and
 174 outpatient isolates.

175 **Table 3. Multi-drug resistant pattern of inpatient and outpatient *S. pneumoniae* isolates [n (%)]**

Class of antibiotic	Resistance pattern*	Inpatient isolates (n=140)	Outpatient isolates (n=140)
5	Macrolides/ β -lactams/tetracyclines/chloramphenicol/sulfonamides	3 (2.1%)	7 (5.0)
4	Macrolides/tetracyclines/chloramphenicol/sulfonamides	1 (0.7%)	5 (3.6%)
	Macrolides/ β -lactams/tetracyclines/sulfonamides	109 (77.9%)	52 (37.1%)
	Macrolides/ β -lactams/tetracyclines/chloramphenicol	1 (0.7%)	0
	Macrolides/ β -lactams/sulfonamides/chloramphenicol	1 (0.7%)	0
3	Macrolides/ β -lactams/tetracyclines	7 (5.0%)	9 (6.4%)
	Macrolides/ β -lactams/sulfonamides	3 (2.1%)	3 (2.1%)
	Macrolides/tetracyclines/sulfonamides	4 (2.9%)	40 (28.6%)
	Macrolides/tetracyclines/chloramphenicol	0	3 (2.1%)
Total	—	129 (92.1%)	119 (85.0%)

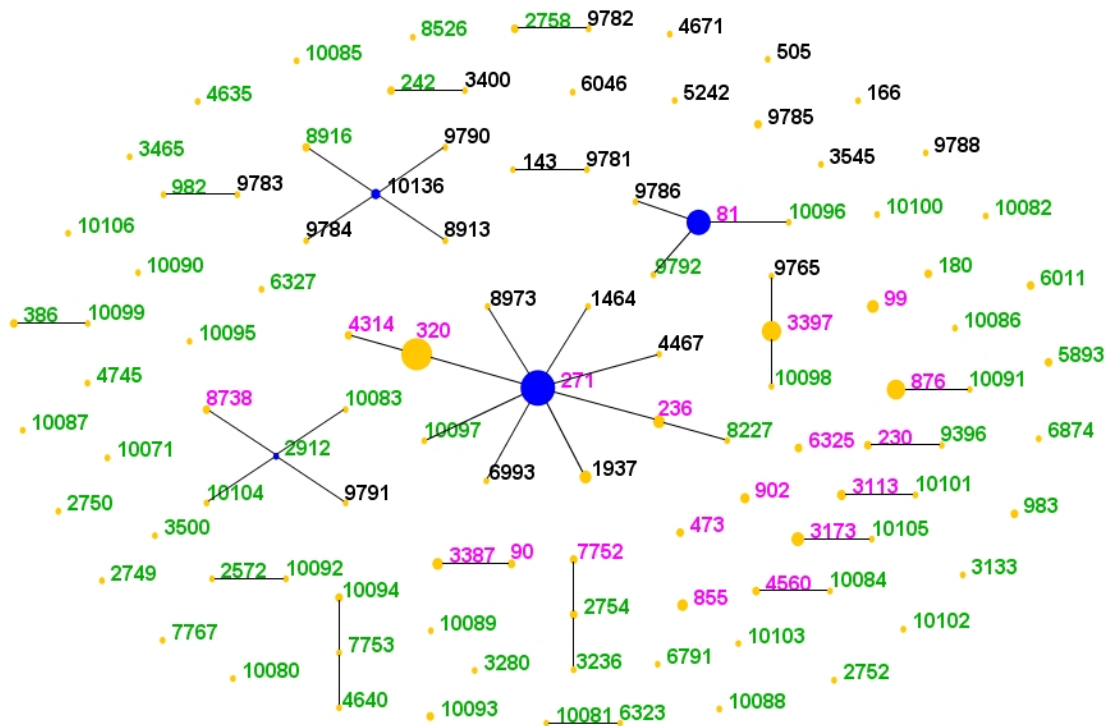
176 * The breakpoint of penicillin was based on the parenteral non-meningitis.

177 MLST

178 The MLSTs of the inpatient and outpatient isolates were shown in table 4. Among the
 179 inpatient isolates, forty-five STs were detected, the predominant STs were ST271 (24.3%,
 180 34/140), ST320 (19.3%, 27/140), ST81 (7.1%, 10/140), ST876 (7.1%, 10/140) and ST3397
 181 (5.7%, 8/140), which were mainly associated with serotypes 19F, 19A, 23F, 14 and 15B,
 182 respectively. Eighty-one STs were detected among the outpatient isolates, the predominant
 183 STs were ST81 (8.6%, 12/140), ST271 (7.9%, 11/140), and ST320 (6.4%, 9/140), which were
 184 associated with serotypes 23F, 19F, and 19A, respectively.

185 The population snapshot of the *S. pneumoniae* isolates as determined by eBURST analysis
 186 is shown in fig. 1. The eBURST analysis results found five CCs and twenty-four singletons

187 among the inpatient isolates, fifteen CCs and forty-two singletons among the outpatient
 188 isolates. CC271 was the most common CC both in the inpatient isolates and outpatient
 189 isolates. Among the inpatient isolates, thirteen STs were newly assigned (9765, 9781 - 9786,
 190 9790, 9791, and 10136) via MLST analysis; three of the new STs (9765, 9781, and 9782)
 191 were novel combinations of known alleles, whereas the remainder had new local alleles (i.e.,
 192 aroE 296, gdh 420, gdh 405, gdh 421, xpt 553, ddl 619, and ddl 620). Among the outpatient
 193 isolates, twenty-seven were newly assigned (10080 - 10106) via MLST analysis. Sixteen of
 194 the new STs (10080 - 10095) were novel combinations of known alleles, whereas the
 195 remainder contained new local alleles (gdh 431 - 433, gki 439, spi 423 - 425, xpt 594 - 595,
 196 and ddl 638 - 639).
 197



198
 199 **Fig. 1 A population snapshot of the inpatient and outpatient *S. pneumoniae* isolates via eBURST**
 200 **analysis.**

201 The size of the dot was proportional to the number of strains included in the ST. The line represent that
 202 there was a single site mutation between the two clones. The black ST numbers represent the isolates from
 203 inpatients, the green ST numbers represent the isolates from outpatients, and the purple ST numbers
 204 represent the isolates from the two patients group.

Table 4. MLST of inpatient and outpatient *S. pneumoniae* isolates [n (%)]

MLST	Inpatient isolates (n=140)	Outpatient isolates (n=140)
271	34 (24.3%)	11 (7.9%)
320	27 (19.3%)	9 (6.4%)
81	10 (7.1%)	12 (8.6%)
876	10 (7.1%)	3 (2.1%)

3397	8 (5.7%)	6 (4.3%)
others	51 (36.4%)	99 (70.7%)

205 **Discussion**

206 The present data showed that the serotypes 19F, 19A, 23F, and 6A were common both in the
 207 inpatient and outpatient isolates, which was similar to previous studies regarding inpatients
 208 with pneumonia and outpatients with upper respiratory infection [5,6]. Within the inpatient
 209 isolates, only fifteen serotypes were identified with the rate of serotypes 19A and 19F
 210 accounting for 53.6%, and twenty-nine serotypes were identified among the outpatient
 211 isolates, with the serotypes 19A and 19F accounting for 21.5%. The serotype distribution was
 212 more concentrated among the inpatient isolates and more comprehensive among the
 213 outpatient isolates.

214 The serotypes 19F and 19A were prevalent either in inpatient isolates or in outpatient
 215 isolates. These two serotypes are very common in invasive pneumococcal diseases [11-13],
 216 which could mean that these two serotypes frequently cause severe pneumococcal infections.
 217 Meanwhile, these two serotypes also showed high levels of antibiotic resistance. A previous
 218 study found that half of the penicillin-resistant isolates were identified as serotype 19F, and 47
 219 of the serotype 19A isolates were non-susceptible to cefuroxime, including 42 (89.4%) that
 220 were resistant [1]. In another study of serotype 19F of *S. pneumoniae* showed that the
 221 non-susceptibility rates to cefaclor and cefuroxime increased from 14.2% in 1997–1998 to
 222 more than 80% in 2010 [14]. One study from Bulgaria found that the MDR of serotype 19A
 223 was 82.7% [15]. Study from the USA reported that serotype 19A was the major MDR
 224 serotype (38.5%) [16]. These results suggest that the prevalent of the serotypes 19F and 19A
 225 among the inpatient isolates and outpatient isolates may be related to the selective pressure of
 226 antibiotics.

227 The serotype coverage rates of PCV7, PCV10 and PCV13 were high among the inpatient
 228 isolates, meaning that the vaccine serotypes were more common among the inpatient isolates.
 229 Many research have proved that PCVs can decrease the pneumococcal carriage rate, disease
 230 morbidity and the antibiotic resistance [17-20]. If the vaccines could be universally
 231 immunized, the decreasing effect of vaccine related serotypes could occur earlier or greater in
 232 the survey on inpatient isolates. In inpatient department, the bacterial culture was a routine
 233 clinical work which ensured the strains can be obtained continuously. In the studies on
 234 evaluation of PCVs universal immunization effectiveness, the inpatient isolates would be a
 235 better scheme. More serotypes were identified in outpatient isolates, maybe, the outpatient
 236 isolates would set up more comprehensive diagram of *S. pneumoniae* serotype distribution,
 237 which could give more information for the evaluation of serotype replacement after the PCVs
 238 immunization.

239 Among the inpatient isolates, the penicillin non-susceptibility rate was 7.1% according to
 240 the non-meningitis parenteral breakpoint (intermediate [4 mg/L], resistant ≥ 8 mg/L). The
 241 rate, however, increased to 94.3% when based on the oral penicillin breakpoint (intermediate
 242 [0.12-1 mg/L], resistant ≥ 2 mg/L)), which was significantly higher than that in developed

243 countries (22.4%) [12]. A systematic literature review of prevalence, mechanisms, and
244 clinical implications in *S. pneumoniae* resistance found that there has been a steady decline in
245 susceptibility of *S. pneumoniae* to commonly used beta-lactams [21]. It should be noted that
246 the lower penicillin non-susceptibility rate according to the non-meningitis parenteral
247 breakpoint did not reflect the resistance to β -lactams, especially in tertiary hospitals where
248 cephalosporins were used more often [22].

249 The non-susceptibility rates against penicillin, amoxicillin-clavulanic acid, imipenem,
250 cefuroxime, cefaclor and trimethoprim-sulfamethoxazole as well as the MDRSP rate among
251 the inpatient isolates were high. These findings suggested different empirical therapies under
252 dissimilar conditions. The Chinese Medical Association recommended different treatment and
253 antimicrobial programs for inpatients and outpatients with infectious *S.pneumoniae* according
254 to the severity of their disease instead of the pathogen resistance [23], and the present study
255 provides an epidemiological reference for this program. Actually, a seminal multicenter
256 survey on antibiotic use in five tertiary children's hospitals showed that penicillins,
257 macrolides, and cephalosporins were prescribed more often in the outpatient department,
258 while second and third generation cephalosporins were more common in the inpatient
259 department, with the fourth generation cephalosporins and carbapenems also administered.²²
260 The present study indicated that the empirical antibiotic program should be different between
261 the inpatients and outpatients.

262 Forty-five STs were identified among the inpatient isolates, with ST271, ST320, ST81,
263 ST876, and ST3397 as the most common STs. Eighty-one STs were detected among the
264 outpatient isolates, with ST81, ST271, and ST320 were the most common STs. The MLSTs in
265 two groups of isolates were consistent with those of a previous study [24]. Twenty-five STs
266 were only identified among the inpatient isolates. As we all known, the inpatients' illness
267 condition was more seriously, it may meant that the STs were related to the disease severity.
268 One study from India found that the STs of the invasive and nasopharyngeal carriage isolates
269 were different. ST 63, ST4219, ST236, ST11921 and ST3135 were more common among
270 invasive isolates, while ST4894, ST1701 and ST236 were more common among
271 nasopharyngeal carriage isolates [25]. There was a survey of epidemiological data showing
272 trends toward the association of the ancestral type of the capsular regulatory genome with
273 carriage and the association of laterally transferred sequences with invasive disease isolates
274 [26]. All of the aforementioned results indicated that the microbiology characteristics were
275 related to the pathogenicity of *S. pneumoniae*.

276 Similar to the serotype distribution, the STs were more concentrated among the inpatient
277 isolates. ST271 and ST320 were high among the inpatient isolates which were associated with
278 serotypes 19F and 19A, respectively. CC271 was the most common CC in the two groups
279 which include ST271, ST320, ST236, and ST4314. According to the data of Pneumococcal
280 Molecular Epidemiology Network (<https://pubmlst.org/spneumoniae>), ST320 belonged to
281 Taiwan^{19F}-14, and the prevalence of resistant CC might be the main reason of high levels of
282 antimicrobial resistance among the inpatient isolates. We really need to take more effective
283 measures to release the antibiotics resistance of *S. pneumoniae*.

284 The present study had several limitations. This was a single-center study, and the clinical
285 background information such as gender, diagnosis and treatment were unavailable. We just

286 describe the epidemiological characteristics of *S. pneumoniae* isolated from inpatients and
287 outpatients. Longitudinal and multicenter surveillance of pneumococcal isolates which with
288 more clinical background information is necessary to confirm the present results and evaluate
289 the influence of PCVs universal immunization in the future.

290 **Abbreviations**

291 PCR: Polymerase chain reaction; MLST: Multilocus sequence typing; CC: Clonal complex;
292 MDR: Multi-drug resistant; MIC: Minimum inhibitory concentration.

293 **Competing interests**

294 The authors declare that they have no competing interests.

295 **Authors' Contributions**

296 All of the authors had full access to the full dataset (including the statistical reports and tables)
297 and take responsibility for the integrity of the data and the accuracy of the analysis. YKH,
298 YYH, LS, XBP, DF, LG, and WQ conceived and designed the study. LS, XBP, DF, LG, WQ,
299 and SW collected the data and developed the analysis. YKH and LS interpreted the data.
300 YKH and LS wrote the first draft of the paper. YKH and YYH reviewed and approved of the
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311

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