Photo Quiz

(For answer and discussion, see page 1312 in this issue [doi:10.1128/JCM.00021-13].)

A 5-Year-Old Male with Multiple Pustules Covering the Entire Scalp

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FIG 1 Pustules on the scalp of a 5-year-old male.

A 5-year-old Mayan male presented to a volunteer-staffed clinic in a remote location in rural southern Belize with a chief complaint of multiple open, painful, pus-filled lesions unresponsive to previous antimicrobial treatment. The child had presented 6 weeks earlier to a neighboring clinic in a nearby village with slight pruritus, dandruff-like scaling of the scalp, crusting of the skin, and black-dotted broken hair follicles scattered throughout the scalp. A diagnosis of simple acute bacterial cellulitis was made, and the patient was prescribed a course of cephalexin at 500 mg two times daily for 14 days. Following the full course of treatment, the symptoms failed to improve. The patient presented again with worsening symptoms, including severe tenderness in the area of the lesions and slight, localized alopecia. At that time, his prescription was changed to dicloxacillin at 250 mg four times daily and 2% mupirocin ointment applied topically three times daily for an additional 14 days. The symptoms remained refractory to anti-

microbial therapy, and the infection worsened over the span of the treatment course. The child then presented with cervical lymphadenopathy, scalp scaling, and patchy alopecia. The lesions had progressed to an inflammatory process consisting of multiple pustules that were boggy and tender, covering the entire scalp of the child. A specimen sample was swabbed from a pustule and sent for laboratory evaluation, at which time the photographs shown in Fig. 1 were captured, a differential diagnosis was made, and treatment options were considered.

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