Reviewer's report

Title: Therapeutic plasma exchange as rescue therapy in severe sepsis and septic shock: retrospective observational single-centre study of 23 patients

Version: 4 Date: 14 January 2014

Reviewer: Tibor Fulop

Reviewer's report:

The paper has generally much improved form the previous version. Some concerns of mine persists, however. The general description of the cohort now much improved and probably brought to the full potential what could be gained form the current dataset. As this cohort was also impacted by acute kidney injury/renal failure and demonstrated net fluid loss with TPE, I still think that the relevant literature related to survival vs. volume-related weight gains in critically ill patients should be cited in the Bibliography.

Page 7, center paragraph (“Dose and adequacy of TPE”), - last sentence does not make sense… do you mean: “…5 patients (56%) in the heparin group..”? Please, clarify

Page 8, 3 para: put in the hospital normal reference range for procalcitonine in the institution also

Table 2 & 3.: while these are very useful would suggest to drop the software-inspired “0/1” categories, and replace them with “Yes/No”, this would make the Tables much easier to read

Also the same comments as above re: procalcitonine (needs normal reference range for procalcitonine in the institution’s lab)

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.