Reviewer's report

Title: Colectomy rate in steroid-refractory colitis initially responsive to cyclosporin: A long-term retrospective cohort study

Version: 1 Date: 5 November 2006
Reviewer: Diarmuid O’Donoghue

Reviewer's report:

General

Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)

This study is important in that it re-iterates the value of ciclosporin in the rescue of patients with steroid refractory UC. Moreover it highlights that there is a small but important long term benefit (avoidance of colectomy) especially for those who are on immunomodulatory agents.

The message of this paper however is lost by the fact that the paper is very badly written and difficult to read. In some places the methods appear in the results and vice versa.

The following are just some examples of the above. In the methods the sentence beginning "Thirty eight patients ..." goes on for ever and is very difficult to comprehend. This must be shortened and broken up. For example the iv group could be briefly described followed by the oral group and then a brief comment on the measurement of CsA levels. Some of what follows on that same page is better in results rather than methods, eg. steroid reduction. In the results section the AZA descriptions would be better in the methods.

The opening paragraph of the discussion re-iterates the results. I am not sure the paragraph on infliximab adds anything to the work and certainly the conclusion does not relate in any way to the paper presented.

The paper would benefit from a complete overhaul of the English used.

Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)

Poor English means some of statements difficult to interpret

Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

What next?: Unable to decide on acceptance or rejection until the authors have responded to the major compulsory revisions

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

Quality of written English: Not suitable for publication unless extensively edited

Statistical review: No

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests