Reviewer's report

Title: Importance of Duodenal Bulb Biopsies in the Diagnosis of Celiac Disease in Clinical Practice

Version: 1 Date: 15 June 2009

Reviewer: David Sanders

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Minor Essential

1. The authors do not clarify if the study has been performed solely by a single endoscopist? I suspect this is the case but it needs to be more explicitly stated in the methods.

2. Was the endoscopist aware of the positive TTG result? Again I would imagine yes but needs to be stated.

3. With regards to the pathologists – the authors are right to say this is real clinical practice with multiple pathologists reporting. However, was there any internal validation check? For example, did the pathologists as a group re-assess any of the cases to ensure that the initial reports were accurate? If so did they do this for the whole cohort?

4. Table 1 is not particularly valuable. I would recommend deleting it and instead providing a table with all 35 patients. This allows the readers to see all cases. This is important because although the authors comment on discordant cases between bulb and distal duodenum – they do not comment on concordance for severity. In other words for the 29 concordant cases was the degree of villous atrophy the same?

5. Within this table they should also give a TTG level that is quantitative (along with a normal range). Symptoms allow the reader ascertain whether there may be a relationship between severity of symptoms and likelihood of having only D1 involved or any other pattern which may immerge.

6. The authors should provide statistics – this should be between concordant and discordant results. This is likely to be a chi-square and likely to be negative but that is ok – the information should still be presented.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.

Declaration of competing interests:
I declare that I have no competing interests