Reviewer’s report

Title: Lewy Bodies and neuronal loss in subcortical areas and disability in non-demented older people: A population based neuropathological cohort study

Version: 1 Date: 6 February 2009

Reviewer: Catherine Brodeur

Reviewer’s report:

Discretionary revisions:

1. in the 1st sentence of the abstract, you say that functional decline is associated with ageing... but can’t this be perceived as ageism? In fact, usually this is not the case, with the elderly population being more healthy and active than years ago. Maybe you could say that usually we can find diseases that explain the functional decline, but sometimes not.

2. I understand that you use only the MMSE as a screening test for all people (GMS restricted to just some people)... are you afraid you could have missed subcortical-frontal cognitive disorders, as we can find in subcortical pathologies? I suggest that for a future study you use tools such as the Frontal Assessment Battery (FAB) by B. Dubois et al.

3. Related to comment 3: if we make an assumption that the people evaluated in your study had undetected subcortical-frontal cognitive disorders, could this contribute to the impairment in IADL? (more cognitive-related).

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests