Reviewer’s report

Title: Acute Monoarthritis in a Delayed Diagnosis of Syphilis Patient with Persistent Rupioid Psoriasis-like Lesions

Version: 2 Date: 23 October 2012

Reviewer: Arlene Sena

Reviewer’s report:

Major revisions:

On page 9, line 11, the authors state that the case fulfills the diagnostic characteristic of secondary syphilis. However, I do not think they provided enough references in the discussion to support this conclusion. The natural history of secondary syphilis is that the rash resolves after several weeks-months followed by a period of latency. The authors need to cite any historical references or recent case reports that provide supporting evidence to their conclusions.

Also, if the authors conclude that this is secondary syphilis, why did the patient have recurring symptoms and require repeated longer durations of therapy with benzathine PCN? Is that due to the higher burden of T. pallidum in the lesions or an altered immune response despite being HIV-negative? The authors state on page 12 that secondary syphilis with longstanding cutaneous eruptions may take longer course of antibiotics, but I would like to see more discussion or references that would support that hypothesis.

Minor revisions:

The paragraph beginning on page 10, line 17 to page 12, line 16 needs to be reorganized into 2-3 paragraphs regarding the rash of secondary syphilis, the joint findings and possibility of reactive arthritis, and response to treatment.

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

Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being published

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

Declaration of competing interests:

I have no competing interests.