Reviewer’s report

Title: Sequelae after bacterial meningitis in Niger: a cohort study

Version: 1 Date: 27 January 2013

Reviewer: A.M. M van Furth

Reviewer’s report:

This is an interesting paper on BM in Niger.

Major Revisions:

- It is unclear how many patients were included and with which diagnosis. The authors mention many different numbers (n=252; n=184; n=104 etc) and also uses difference kind of diagnosis without specifying this. This makes it totally unclear how many patients were included, lost tot follow up etc.

Please clarify this in a figure.

- Please give a Table with the facts on the included children concerning basis parameters such as age, sexe, diagnosis; PCR or latex test etc

- What definitions are used for exposed vs non exposed?

- What is meant with meningeal syndrome and how was this used in terms of inclusion of patients?

- The physician involved who are they? specialty? involved in the study? blinded for results? what kind of examination did they perform and what standardized tests did they use concerning neurological, medical examination

- The same questions as for the physician have to be addressed for the psychologist (standardized tests, involvement, blinded etc) and for the audiology study

- The sequelae have only been tested in 132 which means a lost to follow up of 50% in 3 months which is a lot. This can influence the results dramatically. Please clarify why these patients have been lost.

I think it is very important to try to include these patients and to expand the follow-up period to at least a year to get a better idea of how these sequelae develop in time.

- No clinical data of the patients have been included on how they were treated, clinical development during time, acute neurological signs (hydrocephalus, epilepsy etc); laboratory results (leukopenia; siadh etc); dexamethason use etc which are all of extreme importance for the development of sequelae.

- The discussion has to be rewritten after all the above revisions are clarified

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

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

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests’