Reviewer’s report

Title: Adjunctive corticosteroids for Pneumocystis jiroveci pneumonia in patients with HIV infection: a meta-analysis of randomised controlled trials

Version: 1 Date: 12 July 2005

Reviewer: Raymond A Smego

Reviewer’s report:

General

This is a well-written manuscript, and the topic should be of some interest to ID readers, although admittedly the topic is one that has been well-described and detailed in the past. While the small amount of data from the six literature articles analyzed here is new (in relation to past review articles), the results are not and merely confirm knowledge that has been available (and the basis for sound clinical practice) for 15 years. Still, having said this I believe that the paper is worthwhile.

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Minor Essential Revisions

1) Suggest re-wording Objective statement in the ABSTRACT: To review the effects of adjunctive corticosteroids on overall mortality and the need for mechanical ventilation in HIV-infected patients.
2) METHODS, Study Selection and Data Abstraction, sentence 2: Suggest re-wording: We exclude trials in patients with no or mild hypoxemia.
3) DISCUSSION, page 8, line 1: Suggest changing to: There has been some concern.
4) DISCUSSION, page 8, last word: Would change missing to lacking.
5) Suggest changing systematic review to meta-analysis on page 8 (CONCLUSIONS).
6) RESULTS, Overall Mortality, line 1: Delete statistically.
7) Suggest deleting table of excluded trials.

What next?: Accept after minor essential revisions

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

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No

Declaration of competing interests:

'I declare that I have no competing interests'