Reviewer's report

Title: Treatment of disseminated coccidioidomycosis with diffuse pneumonia by caspofungin and fluconazole

Version: 5 Date: 10 January 2006

Reviewer: Duane Hospenthal

Reviewer's report:

General - The authors revisions make the paper more useful to the reader; better documenting the patient's course and reasons for the selected intervention. The addition of more of the patient's subsequent course calls into question whether he truly had a "successful treatment" in this difficult to cure disease.

Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)

1. Case Presentation (page 6) - now that you have added that your patient's CF antibody titers increased from undetectable (Day 125) to 1:256 (Day 194), you need to further describe what evaluation was done (LP? bone scan?) to rule out relapse/worsening disease. The potential implication of this should discussed in the Discussion section as well.
2. Case Presentation (page 6) - a change in CF titer from 1:256 to 1:128 does not represent a decrease (4-fold change). Please remove "decreased to"
3. Discussion (page 7) - as this patient's titers increased from undetectable to 1:128, I would change the wording of the first sentence from "has been treated successfully" to "responded to treatment"
4. Discussion (page 9) - our report on the treatment failure with caspofungin (reference 12) did not offer proof that this failure was "because the large molecular mass, water solubility, and high protein binding of caspofungin limited penetration into the CSF". Please reword this sentence.

Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)

1. Background (page 3) - many of the sentences are very long and poorly worded.

Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

1. Title - the title could be worded better. Perhaps "Combination therapy of disseminated coccidioidomycosis with caspofungin and fluconazole"
2. Case presentation (page 4) - I would not say "suffering from various symptoms"
3. Case presentation (page 5) - did the patient "complained of persistent fever" or were these documented? If fever was a sign, it should be separated from symptoms.
4. Discussion (page 10) - I do not know of data specifically showing Korean patients any more intolerant of fluconazole. If this is because of other co-morbid conditions, hepatitis B, etc., I would suggest explaining this.

What next?: Accept after minor essential revisions
Level of interest: An article of limited interest

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

Statistical review: No

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interest