Reviewer’s report

Title: A retrospective study of central nervous system shunt infections diagnosed in a university hospital during a 4-year period

Version: 1 Date: 10 November 2005

Reviewer: Amitabha Mitra

Reviewer’s report:

General
The information presented in this paper is a confirmation of already existing knowledge. However, the paper is of significance primarily because of the country of study. The data is sound and methods are appropriate. The discussions and titles are appropriate and well balanced. Though this paper has a small number of cases and little statistical significance can be concluded, the paper merits publication pending the below revisions.

-------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)
Compulsory revisions include:
1) Information on the use of preoperative prophylactic antibiotics.
2) A better table with patient age, interval between surgery and development of infection and final outcome.
3) It would also be beneficial to have a clear understanding between post diversion denovo infection and nosocomial infection as it seems that at least 7 patients are from nosocomial infection (which is preventable).

-------------------------------------------------------------------------------

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) The patient who was operated for intracranial abscess should possibly not be included in this paper.

-------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)
1) There are some grammatical and spelling errors needs to be corrected which are minor in nature.
2) Epidemiology of total 124 patients regarding their age and reasons for shunt operation.
3) Information about the type of Hospital (pediatric or adult)
4) Information about the expertise of surgeons whether pediatric or adult neurosurgeons.
5) Any comorbidities or associated illnesses?

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: Needs some language corrections before being published

Statistical review: No

Declaration of competing interests:
I declare that I have no competing interests.