Reviewer’s report

Title: Associations between Serotonin Transporter Gene Polymorphisms and Heat Pain Perception in Adults with Chronic Pain

Version: 1 Date: 14 December 2012

Reviewer: Uday Ghoshal

Reviewer’s report:

It is interesting study. However, there are several limitations in the design of the study and data interpretation, which require revision/clarification.

Major revision

1. Authors have categorized patients as high, intermediate, or low expressors of the serotonin transporter based on genotypes. How much is the correlation between genotypes and protein expression?

2. How was the sample size calculated? Did the sample size have adequate power for subgroup analysis?

3. One of the major limitations of the study is lack of a control group.

4. “In this study that involved adults with chronic pain, the intermediate triallelic 5-HTTLPR expressing group was associated with greater HP thresholds compared to the high expressing group” – what about comparison with low expressing group?

5. “heterogeneous cohort of adults with chronic pain” – what do the authors mean by heterogeneous cohort of adults with chronic pain? What are these conditions? Authors should describe these patients population more clearly.

6. Were some of these patients opiate dependent?

Minor revision

7. Give representative gel picture of different polymorphisms.

8. Some editing of English are needed

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: Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.

Declaration of competing interests:
No conflict of interest