Reviewer's report

Title: Pregabalin, the lidocaine plaster and duloxetine in patients with refractory neuropathic pain: A systematic review

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Reviewer: Rafael Galvez

Reviewer's report:

- I congratulate the authors on their original research. This paper can be considered of potential relevance in the field of neuropathic pain. It has acceptable scientific and clinical value. I have proposed some changes to improve the manuscript.
- The title and abstract are appropriate
- A clear statement of the purpose of the study is included in the introduction.
- The review of the literature is correct
- The authors do not state very clearly the study inclusion criteria for refractory neuropathic pain, although this is a difficult issue.
- Patients were unequally distributed among the treatment groups. This is a problem because it hampers comparisons among the three groups, introducing a bias.
- The length of the treatments also differs.
- They do not report the doses of the drugs
- The data appear sound but do not offer adequate statistical power, as acknowledged by the authors.
- Conclusions are in accordance with the results and are appropriate
- The discussion adds some value to the paper, and the outcomes are adequately discussed.
- The authors might argue that, although the evidence level of their results is not high, they offer a prediction of the potential clinical applicability of the three drugs in refractory neuropathic pain.
- Limitations in this manuscript are well defined and presented
- Are Tables 5 and 7 necessary?
- Are additional files necessary?
- The references appears to be appropriate and mostly up-to-date. They must complete references 29, 30, 32, 45, 47, 48, 50 and 54. Reference 29 is the same as references 50 and 62
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.