Reviewer’s report

Title: Severe course of Lyme neuroborreliosis in an HIV-1 positive patient; case report and review of the literature.

Version: 3 Date: 25 August 2010

Reviewer: Raphael Stricker

Reviewer’s report:

Major Compulsory Revision

The authors have done an excellent job responding to most of the reviewer comments. Unfortunately the most significant issue remains unresolved: Did the patient have tickborne coinfection(s) with Babesia, Anaplasma, Ehrlichia and/or Bartonella? The authors’ response to this question is inadequate for at least three reasons: First, absence of "typical" clinical features of these coinfections cannot rule out their presence in this immunocompromised patient. Second, the "atypical and severe" clinical presentation of LNB in the patient suggests the presence of a coinfection, as outlined in the previous review. Third and perhaps most important, numerous reports have described these tickborne coinfections in animals and humans in the Netherlands (Tijsse-Klasen et al, Parasit Vectors. 2010;3:42; Nijhof et al, Vector borne Zoonotic Dis. 2007;7(4):585-95; Wielinga et al, Appl Environ Microbiol. 2006;72(12):7594-601; Zandvliet et al, Tijdschr Diergeneesk. 2004;129(22):740-5; Groen et al, Eur J Clin Microbiol Infect Dis. 2002;21(1):46-9; Schouls et al, J Clin Microbiol. 1999;37(7):2215-22; van Dobbenburgh et al, N Engl J Med. 1999;340(15):1214-6; Wielinga et al, Vector borne Zoonotic Dis. 2009;9(1):119-22; Stek et al, J Neurol Neurosurg Psychiatry. 2010 Aug 14. Epub ahead of print), and the authors are well aware of at least one of these references. If samples are available, every effort should be made to test them retrospectively for tickborne coinfections. Failure to do so ignores a significant piece of the diagnostic puzzle in this patient.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

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.