Reviewer's report

Title: Quality of life in childhood epilepsy with lateralized focus

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Reviewer: Nathalie Jette

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The authors address an interesting topic, that of whether QOL is differentially affected in children with right sided vs left sided epileptiform discharges. I enjoyed reading the manuscripts but have some comments for the authors:

Major Compulsory Revisions

1. First of all, the manuscript needs to be edited for language, as there are numerous grammatical errors throughout the manuscript. I began making note of these but by the end of the background section, I had already found numerous English grammatical errors. For example, the title should read “Quality of life in childhood epilepsy with a lateralized potentially epileptogenic focus” or “Quality of life in childhood epilepsy with lateralized epileptogenic foci”. Focus is frequently used instead of foci. Words are often omitted, etc. For example on page 2 (abstract) the first sentence of the results should read: “We found a significant correlation between foci lateralization and reduced QOL…”. The first sentence of the conclusion (abstract) should read: “…and right-hemispheric foci are associated with discordant QOL scores” for example.

2. They should not use the word “impact” in the first sentence of the conclusion as this assumes causation. All they can say is that there is an association between the hemispheric localization of the epileptiform discharges and QOL scores.

3. The last sentence of the abstract needs to be deleted (unclear) and a clear aim or objective sentence added. “The objective of our study was to …”

4. In the first sentence of the methods (abstract) the authors need to clarify which QOL questionnaire they administered.

5. Background should be shortened by at least ½ page. It is too detailed for an introduction. The authors could consider moving some of the information, which is clearly interesting, to the discussion.

6. Background, last sentence of third paragraph should say: “Studying behavioral consequences of lateralized potentially epileptogenic foci may offer some insight into …” I am concerned that the authors are using the terminology “lateralized seizures” when all they did is an EEG and the seizures were never captured in a seizure monitoring unit. Thus all they can say is that the patients had “lateralized epileptiform discharges” (unless they captured seizures on all EEGs which does not appear to be the case).
7. In the background, the objective of the study needs to be stated. Currently the authors say: “We wanted to apply QOLCE as an epilepsy specific measure for subjective wellbeing in children with unilateral epilepsy”. The objective is not clear. Again I do not believe the seizures were captured on video EEG (only epileptiform discharges were). I would suggest an objective such as: Our objective was to assess whether there was an association between lateralized epileptiform discharges in childhood epilepsy and QOL.

8. Methods: The authors state that one of the exclusion was “anatomical malformations detected by magnetic resonance or computed tomography”. Yet only 23/31 children had neuro-imaging. This is a major limitation of the study. All children should have had neuro-imaging. What if they had bilateral lesions on neuro-imaging? Or what if some of them had a lesion that was contralateral to the EEG focus?

9. The authors need to clarify if handedness was assessed. I apologize to the author if it was assessed, but I cannot see this data in the manuscript. This is a critical piece of information, as hemispheric dominance is more important than simply “side” e.g right or left side. This needs to be addressed by the authors.

Minor Essential Revisions

1. EEG should be spelled in full in abstract (as the abbreviation has not previously been defined)

2. Should not use abbreviations at the beginning of a sentence – need to spell in full (e.g. page 3 “WHO” and “QOL” are used at the beginning of sentences; WHO was never defined before in the text).

3. References are usually numbers as “[8]” but at times the authors write “[see: 4]”. It is unclear to me why they used both these formats.

4. Second sentence of background should read: “…affecting 3.6 to 4.2 per 1000 children…”

5. Second paragraph of background should read: “demonstrated in a study of 504 children”

6. Second paragraph of background should read: “It was observed that mood is the strongest predictor…”

7. I stopped writing down grammatical errors after page 3 as there were too many. The manuscript needs to be edited extensively grammatically.

8. The authors need to be consistent with their use of abbreviations. For example on page 8, They sometimes use QOL (second line) and then on the next line write quality of life.

**Level of interest:** An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests
Quality of written English: Not suitable for publication unless extensively edited

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.