Reviewer's report

**Title:** Deterioration after corticosteroids in CIDP may be associated with focal demyelination pattern

**Version:** 1  **Date:** 12 January 2014

**Reviewer:** Peter Van den Bergh

**Reviewer's report:**

The authors retrospectively analyse electrophysiological data of 33/40 PREDICT study patients (the other 7 had an erroneous diagnosis) to find that early deterioration after steroid treatment initiation (defined as within 8 weeks) is associated with focal demyelination and faster (normal) median nerve sensory conduction velocities. The grouping of patients as having focal vs non-focal demyelination is somehow arbitrary, but the main limitation is the highly variable number of nerves examined per patient, particularly with regard to sensory studies. Table 2 illustrates these limitations: CMAP and SNAP amplitudes are given for median nerves only (median values but no IQRs). Interestingly, the mean number of conduction blocks per nerve segment is identical in both groups, which somehow is contradictory with the conclusions. SDs and IQRs should be given for all parameters listed in Table 2. The fact that normal median nerve sensory conduction blocks (non-focal demyelination) correlate with early deterioration and SNAP amplitudes not is difficult to understand and may underscore that nerve conduction data are too limited. The conclusions are difficult to support based on the available data which are limited.

**Level of interest:** An article of limited interest

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

**Statistical review:** No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I do not have competing interests