Reviewer's report

Title: Can testing of six individual muscles represent a screening approach to upper limb neuropathic conditions?

Version: 4 Date: 30 January 2014

Reviewer: Richard Bohannon

Reviewer's report:

I continue to view this work positively. Nevertheless, edits will improve the work:

1) On page 2 the authors write “It has been estimated….” This is passive voice. Just write “Palmer and Cooper estimated…”

2) The authors now allude to the Motricity Index and Motor Index Score, but they do not do so in a productive way. Both use the MRC grading system. The issue is that both the Motricity Index and the Motor Index Score, much like the authors’ examination, seek to characterize status using a limited number of muscles. The authors do not cite these indexes.

3) I would think the authors would acknowledge the limitations of manual muscle testing itself. Considerable weakness can be present even when external manual resistance does not reveal it.

4) The authors claim to test specific muscles. Nope! The best they can do is test specific actions. For example, elbow flexion is generated by the biceps brachii, brachialis, and brachioradialis not just the biceps brachii.

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