Reviewer's report

Title: A new approach: Valproic acid in Huntington's Disease. Dose dependent improvement of myoclonic hyperkinesia in a subgroup: retrospective analysis of eight cases

Version: 2 Date: 23 October 2005

Reviewer: Raphael M. M Bonelli

Reviewer's report:

Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)

Interesting retrospective case report on valproic acid, the largest ever described in HD.

Some points to improve:
1) Background: Tiaprid and tetrabenazine (which is not a neuroleptic!) are not the first line treatment of chorea today (the best data have haloperidol, fluphenazine, and olanzapine).
2) Background: Antidopaminergic medication is not used in HD parkinsonism, and the connection to the presented data is not clear. Nobody would treat myoclonus in HD with antipsychotics.
3) Background: There are several prior papers (Vogel 1991, Kereshi 1980, Previdi 1980, Carella 1993) showing valpric acid to be useful in HD myoclonus; not all of them are cited. The finding itself is not new.
4) so please change the "background section" of the abstract completely (point 1-3)
5) The results are very interesting and well-presented
6) Conclusions: no one would treat a rigid form of HD with antipsychotics, so delete this argument from your paper

What next?: Unable to decide on acceptance or rejection until the authors have responded to the major compulsory revisions

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No