Reviewer's report

Title: Impairment of intellectual functions after surgery and posterior fossa irradiation in children with ependymoma is related to age and neurologic complications

Version: 1 Date: 8 July 2007

Reviewer: Cornelia.E Catsman-Berrevoets

Reviewer's report:

General
The paper is well written and concerns an interesting topic. However some compulsory revisions are needed before the paper might be considered to be accepted.

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

1. The authors state that hydrocephalus at presentation showed a trend to negatively influence the intellectual outcome in their ependymoma patients. In the methods they however do not describe their definition of hydrocephalus, how it was measured, if different degrees of severity influenced the results. In addition the presence or absence of periventricular lucencies as a measure of severity of hydrocephalus cq raised ICP is not mentioned at all.

2. Authors state that cerebellar damage strongly correlates with the IQ measurements. As measure of cerebellar damage they consider cerebellar symptoms. However, no attempt was made to correlate the neuropsychological results with the site and size of cerebellar lesion. The absence of this information makes this paper rather superficial, which is a great pity because for the authors this information should not be hard to obtain and could ameliorate the quality of the paper considerably. Taking into account the site of the lesion the discussion why PIQ was so much lower than VIQ would become more relevant.

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Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)

Minor language errors. French terms (for example allouette) should be translated into English

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Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

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

**Level of interest:** An article of importance in its field

**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 have no competing interests