Reviewer's report

Title: Fecal Calprotectin in Cystic Fibrosis

Version: 1 Date: 14 December 2013

Reviewer: Andrew S Day

Reviewer's report:

This manuscript by Rumman and colleagues examines levels of faecal calprotectin (previously known as CF-related antigen) in individuals with CF.

There is increasing interest in the role that the CFTR may play in other organs, and the impact that gut inflammation may play in CF outcomes.

Specific Comments:

1. This work does not include age matched controls
2. The researchers included patients with CF and another group with CRMS. The combination of these two groups needs better justification. Does one expect the same events to occur in the two groups? How do changes in CRMS relate to that of CF directly?
3. There are a number of errors of grammar and English construction that need correction.
4. Were concurrent enteric infections excluded in the subjects?
5. Were other factors that can elevate calprotectin considered? (e.g. steroid use, NSAID exposure, IBD etc)
6. The authors refer to "CF enteropathy", which implies small intestinal dysfunction. Is there any support for this?
7. Subsections within the Methods and Results sections would enhance clarity
8. The methods notes that three subjects were excluded because of incomplete data. Subsequently we learn that only some of the subjects had pulmonary function testing data - why were those without lung function tests also excluded??
9. Similarly, lung function testing is able to be completed from infancy - it is not clear why some patients did not have this assessment completed routinely
10. Although the median age was 8 years, the study included adults as well as children. The authors should present also the assessment of the children separate to the adults, as other bias could influence variation with age
11. The Discussion is too long, and should be revised to enhance flow and clarity.
12. The Tables need extensive revision and reconsideration. The Legends/Titles are inadequate. Table 3 is excessively long. Table is unhelpful and should be deleted.
13. Referencing is incomplete in some places (with incorrect placement of references (e.g. at the bottom of page 5)

Minor Comments:
1. One assumes that the ELISA was completed according to the instructions of the manufacturer? This should be stated..
2. Some sentences begin with numerals - these should be converted to letters

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: Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.

Declaration of competing interests:
I declare that I have no competing interests