Reviewer’s report

Title: Psychosocial outcomes of children with ear infections and hearing problems: a longitudinal study

Version: 1 Date: 25 November 2013

Reviewer: Rosa Calvo

Reviewer’s report:

This longitudinal study investigates the relationship of ear infections during childhood as well as hearing problems with further psychosocial difficulties along development. Previous cross-sectional studies have already investigated association with hearing loss and attention, language and behavior problems. The authors report the results of these studies in their well organized and complete introduction.

However, some considerations should be taken into account to understand the real meaning of the results provided.

Major compulsory revisions

Assessment of hearing was not performed and no information from clinical records regarding the hearing loss seem to have been available.

“Seems not to hear” and “does not pay attention to my words” is a frequent complain and major concern of parents of those children who later on will receive ADHD or ASD diagnoses. And only some of them have real hearing problems. Once audition examinations are done begins the evaluation for attention, social interaction, communication and cognitive level of the child.

Reporting hearing loss parents could be misinterpreting the behavior of their inattentive child and giving and unintended false report. This is not the case for the more objective ear infection that usually requires some level of medical care.

Discussion should address this point and results should be carefully interpreted considering this issue. A reasonable approach could be the confirmation of the early report of hearing loss by parents as an early sign of risk of development of psychopathology that should not be missed by professionals.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.
Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests