Reviewer’s report

Title: Alertness and visuospatial attention in clinical depression

Version: 2 Date: 20 February 2011

Reviewer: Mario Liotti

Reviewer’s report:

A point of weakness of the paper is the lack of consistency across tests. This is mostly the consequence of the results in the subtest TAP-Visual Scanning, which is much less sensitive to reveal left sided neglect/extinction because attention is guided to the left upon each trial (a manipulation in fact aimed at reducing hemineglect/extinction). This is not to deny the value of the sub-test (for example in rehabilitation).

I believe the message may become stronger, without detracting any substantial point in the paper, if the TAP-Visual Scanning condition would be removed altogether.

The authors could then be much less defensive and tentative since the results would be more robust across tasks.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

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

Declaration of competing interests:

n/a