Reviewer's report

Title: Evaluation of patients on sertindole treatment after failure of other antipsychotics: a retrospective analysis

Version: 1 Date: 6 August 2007

Reviewer: Siegfried Kasper

Reviewer's report:

This is a very interesting study evaluating the efficacy of sertindole before and after suspension. There are a few comments which need to be taken into account:

Major Compulsory Revisions:

1) The article would benefit from more clarity like e.g. in the methods section in the abstract it would be good to have the total number of patients studied and also to have the four periods explained. The four periods are explained in the results section, however, this should already be included in the methods section.

2) On page 4, it is written that sertindole was temporarily suspended in the Netherlands in 1999. To my knowledge, sertindole was withdrawn by Lundbeck from the market in 1998.

3) On page 5, when data sources are described it would be good to have already the total number of patients. The total number of patients can only be depicted from the tables and comes later in the results section. Since safety and tolerability was an important issue for sertindole, some findings about safety and tolerability should also be available in the manuscript.

4) On page 10 in the 2nd paragraph, it was noted that "certain patients were not at all responding to the available treatments." I do not think that this is a scientific statement. They should give figures if the patients were responding or not.

5) Figure 2, the different periods need to be explained, to be for example related to figure 1. Moreover fig. 2 is not clear if the statistically significant differences relate to the number of new hospitalizations or to the mean duration of hospitalizations. It is also not clear if they relate to base line and how they relate within the different periods.

6) Fig.2 is also not clear in the sense that for hospitalizations paragraphs are used and for durations of hospitalizations a line is used. Since these are not continuous variables, bars for both parameters should be used.

7) In table 1, the total number of patients to be studied should be given.

8) Tables 3 and 4 are sufficient, however, a text should be given.
There are no minor essential revisions or discretionary revisions necessary.

**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:** Acceptable

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

**Declaration of competing interests:**

The reviewer received consultancy fees as well as fundings from a number of companies manufacturing atypical antipsychotics, including Lundbeck, the manufacturer of sertindole. The reviewer does not have any stocks or shares, no patent related to the content of the manuscript.