Reviewer's report

Title: Systematic review with meta-analysis: Cytokines in fibromyalgia syndrome

Version: 1  Date: 9 September 2011

Reviewer: Andreas Goebel

Reviewer's report:

The methodology of this interesting study appears sound. I have only few suggestions:

a) the listing of study results and quality etc. should be exclusively in the table. Summary data could go into the main text. The way it is written now, the result section is difficult to read. I would prefer the tables in portrait format - much easier to read electronically.

b) please explain in the methods section why plasma and serum results need to be listed separately

c) where you discuss plasma IL-8, you seem to compare positive plasma results with negative serum results (page 12, line 3); if this is not a mistake, then again its not clear why you report these separately at all.

c) one worry with negative study results is that the test kits used may not be able to pick up raised cytokine levels at the low concentration seen in FMS. There has been a development of test kits over time, which you should discuss. Can you either reassure readers, that this was not a problems, or alternatively list those studies using kits which would not have been expected to detect those levels seen in the positive studies.

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

Quality of written English: Acceptable

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

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests