Reviewer's report

Title: Profile and course of early Rheumatoid Arthritis in Morocco. A two-year follow-up study.

Version: 1 Date: 9 May 2011

Reviewer: Laure Gossec

Reviewer's report:

This is an interesting article reporting a small cohort of early Ra in Morocco.

MINOR IMPORTANT COMMENTS

1. Abstract numbers
   Are results range or inter quartile range?

2. Abstract
   How can mg of prednisone for patients taking prednisone be 0-8? It should be 1-8…Please check.

3. Abstract prediction: is JC swollen or tender?

4. Methods: is follow up at 1 and 2 years (see lost to follow up) or only at 2 years? Please clarify.

5. Radiographic scoring – please state which score was used.

6. Results: how can parity in women with children be 0 to 5? Is this range or interquartile range? In both cases it should be 1-5 please check.

7. Results of HLA please give as is usual, % of patients with a single dose or a double dose of the shared epitope.

8. Table 1 would be more informative by showing all patients / progressors / non-progressors.

9. Discussion: for me the main results are not prediction (since because of small sample size nothing is significant – this should indeed be clearly discussed) but rather remission prevalence and lack of erosions in this cohort. Please discuss these points.

10. Discussion: please discuss if hospital is free for all and how patients have access to treatment in Morocco. Could this have induced bias?

11. Discussion: the paragraph about children could probably be deleted (it does not bring new knowledge).

12. The discussion is too long and should be otherwise shortened by a page or so.

MINOR COMMENTS
1. Please define abbreviations in the abstract (RA, STVDH).
2. Please add Das remission in abstract instead of remission.
3. Please check the English eg high scarcity (intro), parity (wrong term) in Methods, ACPA instead of anti CCP (methods), evolution (please say progression) in Results.
4. 1987 RA criteria in methods since there are new ones.

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

**Declaration of competing interests:**

no conflicts