Reviewer’s report

Title: Hidden consequences of olfactory dysfunction

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Reviewer: Monique Smeets

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“Hidden consequences of olfactory dysfunction” By Keller et al.

The manuscript deals with consequences of olfactory dysfunction (anosmia, hyposmia, phantosmia etc.) on quality of life. Although the topic and treatment are not altogether new and have been covered in the literature before, the Keller et al. contribution is different in the sense that it reports on a very large sample (N = 1,000) and the qualitative portion of the study provides a wealth of information on the phenomenology related to sense of smell disorders. In addition to aspects of the disorder covered previously, it adds to this literature by offering extra insights into e.g. triggers of distorted smells. The authors rightfully point out that this a research area deserving of attention. The appendix including patient reports is especially insightful.

This study will help bring smell disorders and the full impact they have on patients to the attention of medical specialists and psychologists so they will be quicker to consider this pathology as a potential cause of reported symptoms and give serious attention to it, which I see as the most important function of the paper. Thus, I believe that the goal of better education of patients, the public and professionals (stated in the conclusion) will be met by this contribution.

I have only minor essential revisions:

Abstract/introduction

While the study aims to be a quantitative review as well as a qualitative description of its wide phenomenology, the latter seems to dominate. This was in not in line with my expectations as I started reading (especially since there were 1,000 respondents.). Perhaps the authors could state explicitly in the introduction that it is their objective (also) to give the reader an insight into the wealth of subject experiences from the numerous reports. I wish to point out that it was especially the abstract that raised my expectation that this study would be quantitative rather than qualitative.

The manuscript reviews a large number of publications on related topics. What I miss is a more explicit discussion of studies comparing patient groups to control groups using measures of quality of life. How do we know that diminished quality of life is due to smell disorder? This would at least need to be pointed out, in my opinion.

Methods/Results

The authors have used a questionnaire by Frasnelli and Hummel. The authors
use 2 pages to go over all the items or item changes. This makes for somewhat boring text, which takes speed out of reading through the otherwise very interesting manuscript. Could this information be reduced of included as additional file?

**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