Reviewer's report

Title: Evidence for the use of Levomepromazine for symptom control in the palliative care setting: a systematic review.

Version: 2 Date: 3 December 2012

Reviewer: Gerhild Becker

Reviewer's report:

The manuscript “Evidence for the use of Levomepromazine for symptom control in the palliative care setting: a systematic review” by Dietz and colleagues investigated the published evidence for the use of Levomepromazine in palliative symptom control. Levomepromazine is a neuroleptic drug which is used in a broad range of indications such as palliative sedation, nausea and vomiting, delirium and terminal restlessness. Even though there exist several publications regarding the specific indications for Levomepromazine, the particular perspective of this review is to provide a comprehensive overview and illustrate the diverse applicability for Levomepromazine in palliative symptom control. These aspects of summarizing and updating the available evidence for the use of this interesting drug will be of relevance for a wide audience regarding the treatment of patients in the palliative care setting.

Minor issues not for publication
1) Manuscript:
   Section “Methods”, paragraph “Data extraction and assessment of studies”, line 12: Level 5 instead of Level D
2) Figures and Tables:
   Table 6: correct partial response to partial response
3) References:
   52. Twycross R, … line 3: incorrect citation style.

Minor essential Revisions:
I would like to recommend some minor revisions:
1) Abstract
   Section “Results”: starting line 1: “33 articles including …” The addition of the numbers does not lead to 33 articles or the chosen formulation seems to be unmistakable.
2) Manuscript
Section “Results”, paragraph “Study selection”: starting line 9: “27 out of these 33….” The addition of the numbers does not lead to 33 or the chosen formulation seems to be mistakable.

3) Figures and Tables

a) Figure 1: Flowchart of study selection process: “Full copies retrieved and assessed for eligibility n = 84” is misleading compared to the numbers in section “Results”, paragraph “Study selection” line 7: “remaining 81 references full copies”

b) Figure 3: Table 2: PICOS approach in our systematic review according to the PRISMA guidelines: S = study designs: the type of study designs included in the review should be reported as shown in Section “Methods”, paragraph “Study characteristics” line 4: randomized controlled trials, prospective trials, cohort studies, case series, case reports, systematic reviews.

4) Appendix

Quality checklist STROBE with a total count of 32 points. I would like to recommend a short explanation why the authors use 32 items instead of 22 items for STROBE checklist.

**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:**

I declare that I have no competing interests