Reviewer's report

Title: Is acupuncture "stimulation" a misnomer? A case for using the term "blockade"

Version: 1 Date: 4 February 2013

Reviewer: Helene Langevin

Reviewer's report:

First, on page 5 paragraph 1: the authors state that laser and capsaicin treatment have clinical effects (i.e. pain reduction) "equivalent" and "identical", respectively to those of acupuncture, and infer from this that the mechanisms are therefore likely to be "identical or comparable". This is not true. Two different methods to treat hypertension, for example, (e.g. vasodilators and diuretics) may reduce blood pressure to the same degree, but do it through entirely different mechanisms.

Second, on page 7-8: the authors argue that the precise location of the acupuncture needle "at sites of fascia perforations" is important. The evidence cited to justify this conclusion is misquoted. Reference 27 contains data indicating that acupuncture points are preferentially located along connective tissue planes, NOT at sites of fascial perforations. The only study to my knowledge that has reported associations between acupuncture points and fascial perforations was a study by Heine that did not include any examination of non-acupuncture points or statistical analyses.