Reviewer's report

Title: Reversal of childhood idiopathic scoliosis in an adult, without surgery: a case report

Version: 2 Date: 25 February 2009

Reviewer: Stefano Negrini

Reviewer's report:

Dear friends,

this manuscript is of very high importance for the Scoliosis audience and conservative community, but it needs some important revisions to allow a better understanding of treatment and results obtained

Major Compulsory Revisions

1. Throughout the paper the presumption is that manipulation was the most important part of the results obtained. This could be true, but could also be wrong: in fact exercises have been applied as well, and presumably the psychological change played a major role in changing activities of daily life of the patient. Considering the increasing intensity of this possible actors of the change (manual therapy, externally applied, quite infrequent; exercises, auto-applied, frequent; everyday habits, continous) a thorough discussion is needed. Moreover, we have data on the efficacy of exercises, while we have nothing on manipulations. Please, be more cautious and change phrasing throughout the paper, maintaining a correct scientific doubtful approach.

2. You cite exercises, but you do not give any detail on the type of exercises performed. You should give cathegories (i.e. mobilisation, strengthening, etc) but also give examples of these exercises, to let the readers understand what could have been their role in the results achieved.

3. From your paper it clearly appears that the first subjective improvement was related to a psychological intervention. You should consider that such a psychological change can for sure be correlated to a postural improvement, and posture is part of scoliosis. Moreover, an important psychological change can drive to change in the everyday activities, being more active, and more involved in sport/physical activities, that in turn can cause muscular changes that could be even more important than the treatment proposed. We definitively need to understand what were the sport/physical activities practiced before 1992 and after, and how these have been performed. In any case they are concurrent causes of the patients' history and results.

4. CMM: what is this ? You cite unpublished data, that means that nobody can know what is your manual treatment. Please, develop a "Treatment applied" section where you should explain carefully CMM, exercises (see previous #1 and #2) and activities of daily life (#1 and #3), giving examples as well as details on the number of sessions performed, with which frequency in the brief and long
term. What you write on CMM is so technical that not-osteopaths have big
difficulties in understanding: give examples.

5. I don't think that citing all physicians involved in the patient's history is
appropriate. Moreover, why you cited the MD and not the PT? Did you have a
consent to write the names? If no, you should cancel the names; if yes, in any
case I would prefer not to have them in the paper.

Minor Essential Revisions
1. The abstract should be improved describing better the treatment options as
previously proposed to do in the text
2. In the abstract is stated "As chest excursion increased, Cobb angle
decreased". The vast majoriry of people would write exactly the opposite,
because written in this way it appears a cause-effect that is only a supposition,
moreover not widely accepted. Please, re-write.
3. The discussion is generic, with no comments on the treatment applied versus
the other proposals reported in the literature. The discussion reported above
about the possible effect of the different treatments should be proposed here:
you can give your idea, but also consider that other options could be true.
Moreover, no discussion is given to the possible role of the different approaches
proposed versus the literature.

Discretionary Revisions
1. page 6, first line: separate the title from the text

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Declaration of competing interests:
I declare that I have no competing interests