Reviewer's report

Title: Development of recurrent facial palsy during plasmapheresis in Guillain-Barre syndrome: a case report

Version: 1 Date: 14 March 2010

Reviewer: Said R. Beydoun

Which of the following best describes what type of case report this is?: An unexpected event in the course of observing or treating a patient

Has the case been reported coherently?: No

Is the case report authentic?: Yes

Is the case report ethical?: Yes

Is there any missing information that you think must be added before publication?: No

Is this case worth reporting?: No

Is the case report persuasive?: No

Does the case report have explanatory value?: No

Does the case report have diagnostic value?: Yes

Will the case report make a difference to clinical practice?: Yes

Is the anonymity of the patient protected?: Yes

Comments to authors:

It is is difficult to prove that plasmapheresis altered the course of GBS and was causative of the development of the recurrent facial palsies for the following reasons:

1- The 1st episode of the facial palsy was transient and thus likely represented a physiologic phenomenon. Most likely, it is related to changes in nerve excitability, potentially due to electrolytes or low ionized calcium, or other affecting nerve membrane function.

2- The 2nd episode could be coincidental i.e., part of the disease progression, ad the patient was beginning to show progression which evolved gradually, involving the opposite facial muscles and limb muscle weakness.

3- Blink Reflex studies were not consistent with an efferent defect (facial nerve
pathology), rather they supported an afferent defect. so how can the authors explain that in the context of their patient's facial palsies? Those studies test the integrity of the pathway involving the trigeminal nerve, brainstem, facial nuclei and the facial nerve. They are also very sensitive in defining localization of the lesion, irrespective of pathophysiology (demyelination or Wallerian degeneration).

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests