Reviewer's report

Title: Sustained remission of rheumatoid arthritis with SSRI antidepressant: a case report

Version: 1 Date: 11 August 2010

Reviewer: Sandra Sacre

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?: Yes

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?: Yes

Is this case worth reporting?: Yes

Is the case report persuasive?: Yes

Does the case report have explanatory value?: Yes

Does the case report have diagnostic value?: No

Will the case report make a difference to clinical practice?: No

Is the anonymity of the patient protected?: Yes

Comments to authors:

This is an interesting case report of a man who experienced a remission of his rheumatoid disease symptoms when taking a prescribed SSRI for his depression. There are a few minor comments below that need to be addressed by the authors.

1. The authors refer to a bi-directional link between mood disorders and inflammation. Are the authors suggesting that depression is able to induce inflammation? This statement should be rewritten or alternatively a reference to support this concept would need to be included.

2. The patient at one point received simvastatin, the duration of the treatment with simvastatin and the dose should be included. Was the simvastatin stopped...
before administering an SSRI? Simvastatin has also been reported to have anti-inflammatory effect not linked to its primary mode of action.

3. The dose and frequency of escitalopram on recommencing treatment should be included in the manuscript.

4. The authors state that 'Inflammation is thought to have a direct impact on biological substrates'. What substrates? More detail is needed, do the authors mean cytokines?

5. The full name should be given on the first mention of CRP and CIA

6. Toll-like receptors respond to both pathogens and to endogenous molecules found at sites of inflammation and tissue damage. They respond to molecular pattern that include nucleic acids (RNA and DNA) not just proteins.

7. In the conclusion the authors have suggest that antidepressants mediate their effect by agonistic actions on 5ht2a receptors or on toll-like receptors. The way this is written is misleading as SSRIs are shown in the reference in the discussion in the manuscript to inhibit toll-like receptors.

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Declaration of competing interests:

I have filed a patent 'The use of SRI to treat arthritis (WO/2008/090331) but have not received any money in relation to this patent to date nor are likely to in the foreseeable future. The work relating to this patent is cited in this manuscript.