Reviewer's report

**Title:** Cervical myelopathy caused by atlantoaxial instability in a patient with total aplasia of the posterior arch of the atlas: a case report

**Version:** 1  **Date:** 19 March 2012

**Reviewer:** Vasileios Souftas

Which of the following best describes what type of case report this is?: New associations or variations in disease processes

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?: Yes

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

Is the anonymity of the patient protected?: Yes

**Comments to authors:**

I believe that this article is worth being published in the Journal of Medical Case Reports, after a few minor revisions (essential and discretionary). I suggest, if I might, the following revisions:

1. Case presentation, second paragraph: I think that the term "encephalomalacia" (...and encephalomalacia ... at the C1 level.) is less appropriate than the term "myelomalacia".

2. Fig 2: Atrophy of the spinal cord is also seen (myelomalacia).

3. Discussion, second paragraph: The authors may refer also to the article by Samartzis D, Shen FH, Herman J, and Mardjetko SM . Atlantoaxial rotatory fixation in the setting of associated congenital malformations. Spine 2010, 35: E119-E127.
Quality of written English: Acceptable

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests.