Reviewer's report

**Title:** Acute embolic cerebral ischemia as an initial presentation of polycythemia vera: a case report

**Version:** 2 **Date:** 25 January 2013

**Reviewer:** Kishore R Kumar

Which of the following best describes what type of case report this is?: Unexpected or unusual presentations of a disease

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:

The case is interesting, showing an example of an acute ischaemic stroke due to polycythemia vera which responded to haemodiluation, of which there are few case reports in the literature.

The case is well written. The investigations performed were complete in assessing for alternative causes of stroke and sources of embolism. It would be useful for the authors to include a cerebral MRI indicating the areas of restricted diffusion.

The Cochrane review by Asplund (ref 10) was for patients with acute ischaemic stroke and did not specifically include patients with haematological conditions. Therefore, it has limited relevance to this case report, although Asplund does
state that ‘[h]aemodilution for acute ischaemic stroke should not be used outside of clinical trials with the possible exception of patients with severe polycythemia’, as alluded to by the authors.

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I have no competing interests with the subject of this paper.