Reviewer's report

Title: Tocopheryl acetate 20% spray for elimination of head louse infestation: a randomised controlled trial comparing with 1% permethrin creme rinse

Version: 2 Date: 17 July 2013

Reviewer: Salvatore Amoroso

Reviewer's report:

The Manuscript “Tocopheryl acetate 20% spray for elimination of head louse infestation: a randomised controlled trial comparing with 1% permethrin creme rinse” written by Ian F Burgess, Nazma A Burgess, Elizabeth R Brunton is a randomized, controlled, assessor blind clinical study showing that 20% tocopheryl acetate based spray is more effective than permethrin 1% creme rinse in treating head louse infestation.

Despite the experimental procedures supporting this conclusion have been conducted on a small sample size of 45 participants, the obtained results seem very solid. The paper is well written and interesting, in particular in light of the increasing resistance to the pyrethroid permethrin. The following minor modifications could improve the manuscript.

1) The poor efficacy of permethrin could be related to the increasing resistance to this drug (Bouvresse S et al., J Am Acad Dermatol. 2012 67:1143-50; Drali R et al., J Clin Microbiol 2012;50:2229-33). Authors should further discuss this issue.

2) Does the study has any limitation? For example, I believe that the exclusion of people that have been treated with permanent waves or hair colours is an important limitation, given that this could be a very common condition for parents whose children were infested with head lice, and that need a pharmacological treatment.

Authors should clarify the limitations of the study.

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

Declaration of competing interests:

'I declare that I have no competing interests'