Reviewer’s report

Title: Optimizing biologic treatment in IBD: objective measures, but when, how and how often?

Version: 0 Date: 11 Oct 2015

Reviewer: Jan Preiss

Reviewer's report:

The authors Shomron Ben-Horin et al. submitted a fine and exhaustive review about the use of laboratory and imaging markers in assessing patients with inflammatory bowel diseases. They cover the area by looking at the following situations:

- before and during induction phase
- after induction
- at loss of response
- before and after stopping therapy
- role of endoscopy for optimizing treatment

I only have very few comments:

1. In the section "before and during induction phase" the authors give an exhaustive review on the role of CRP. They should also discuss the role of fecal calprotection and abdominal ultrasound in this situation. In countries where ultrasound is routinely used by gastroenterologists themselves at the bedside, e.g. Italy, Switzerland, or Germany, this technology proved to be excellent for verifying inflammation without relying on more invasive or complex imaging modalities, i.e. endoscopy or MRI, especially in terminal ileitis, where calprotectin is often false negative.

2. At the end of the section about therapeutic drug monitoring the authors give a caveat about this method: optimal thresholds need to be established. The authors mention themselves that "patients with adequate drug levels and active inflammation will USUALLY respond better to switch to another class of drugs". Relying to heavily on these algorithms might miss a few patients in whom a higher drug level will lead to clinical response therby unnecessarily foregoing one of the few drugs that exist for Crohn's disease. I feel the authors need to discuss this caveat too.

3. In discussing the role of mucosal healing the authors will have to mention the POCER study and the role of endoscopy in optimizing post-operative treatment.
Conclusions drawn adequately supported by the data shown?
If not, please explain in your comments to the authors.

Yes

Are you able to assess any statistics in the manuscript or would you recommend an additional statistical review?
If an additional statistical review is recommended, please specify what aspects require further assessment in your comments to the editors.

Not relevant to this manuscript

Quality of written English
Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

Acceptable

Declaration of competing interests
Please complete a declaration of competing interests, considering the following questions:

1. Have you in the past five years received reimbursements, fees, funding, or salary from an organisation that may in any way gain or lose financially from the publication of this manuscript, either now or in the future?

2. Do you hold any stocks or shares in an organisation that may in any way gain or lose financially from the publication of this manuscript, either now or in the future?

3. Do you hold or are you currently applying for any patents relating to the content of the manuscript?

4. Have you received reimbursements, fees, funding, or salary from an organization that holds or has applied for patents relating to the content of the manuscript?

5. Do you have any other financial competing interests?

6. Do you have any non-financial competing interests in relation to this paper?

If you can answer no to all of the above, write 'I declare that I have no competing interests' below.
If your reply is yes to any, please give details below.

I declare that I have no competing interests

I agree to the open peer review policy of the journal. I understand that my name will be included on my report to the authors and, if the manuscript is accepted for publication, my named report
including any attachments I upload will be posted on the website along with the authors' responses. I agree for my report to be made available under an Open Access Creative Commons CC-BY license (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/). I understand that any comments which I do not wish to be included in my named report can be included as confidential comments to the editors, which will not be published.

I agree to the open peer review policy of the journal