Reviewer's report

Title: One-year follow-up of patients with long-lasting post-herpetic neuralgia.

Version: 3  Date: 8 August 2014

Reviewer: Marius Birlea

Reviewer's report:

Minor essential revisions:

An important observation remains: the statement in the abstract Conclusions that "Antiviral therapy used within 72 hours from the rash onset reduces the risk of higher VAS in the follow up" needs to be more carefully addressed, to avoid looking speculative.

Estimation of “natural history” regarding the pain can be made if no treatments for pain were administered in the 6 months before the enrollment in the study or during the 12 months of study. In their response, the authors agree that the treatment given by the Pain clinic is responsible by the reduction of VAS at all time points, meaning that the natural history was altered. If it is mentioned in the manuscript that there was no significant difference in the treatment given to the patients (other than antivirals at the time of rash), than it probably can be said that the initial antiviral treatment had an impact on the pain at time 0 (T0). During the 12 months study period, there was a continuous improvement of symptoms in most patients and remains difficult to explain a correlation of the antiviral treatment at the time of rash with decrease of pain at T6 but not at T3 or T12. In the Discussion section of revised Manuscript, the authors correctly state that a potential explanation can be the variability of clinical response.

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'