Reviewer’s report

Title: A Retrospective Study of Contributing Factors for Prognosis and Survival Length of Cryptococcal Meningoencephalitis in Southern Part of China (1998-2013)

Version: 3 Date: 5 December 2014

Reviewer: Sally Cheuk-ying CY Wong

Reviewer’s report:

An interesting paper illustrating some characteristics of patients with cryptococcal meningitis in southern China and prognostic factors which may be useful to clinicians managing patients with cryptococcal meningitis.

Major Compulsory Revisions
1. Line 106: Please clarify what 'abnormal symptoms' imply?
2. Under 'Materials and Methods - therapy':
   a. Please clarify the formulation and dosage of amphotericin B used: dosage is often expressed in mg/kg (i.e. weight dependent dosing) and varies across different formulation.
   b. The authors stated that patients were treated with FCZ and 5-FC until 'cryptococcus was no longer present in at least three sequential CSF examination'. Firstly, the authors need to define what was meant by 'cryptococcus no longer present', is it by microscopy? culture? Secondly, current recommendations, e.g. IDSA guideline recommends that patients with cryptococcal meningitis should be treated for a minimum duration of 6 months.

Minor Essential Revisions
1. If it is indeed dependent on when 'cryptococcus was no longer present in at least three sequential CSF examination', duration of treatment should be stated within the text or in Table 1, as the duration of treatment can influence the outcome of these patients.

Discretionary Revisions
1. Authors should try to include and analyse data regarding cryptococcal antigen titre and fungal load in this group of patients if such information is available.

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

Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being published
Statistical review: Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.

Declaration of competing interests: I declare that I have no competing interests.