Reviewer’s report

Title: The performance of rapid plasma reagin (RPR) titer in HIV-negative general paresis after neurosyphilis therapy

Version: 1 Date: 05 Dec 2017

Reviewer: Tim Read

Reviewer's report:

Thanks for taking the time and going to considerable effort to revise your paper. I accept that your patient population probably all have neurosyphilis and that you have an adequate case-definition, although I wonder how confidently you can exclude Alzheimer's disease with coincident positive syphilis serology and a slight abnormality in protein or WBC in the CSF? If this is a possibility you may wish to mention it in your limitations paragraph. The English is awkward but can mostly be understood. I've made some suggestions for minor improvements:

Abstract: MMSE needs to be defined at first use.

Lines 17 to 20. This is poorly written, very confusing and needs editing for fluency.

Background. Line 14. Delete "which is" (criteria is plural). Line 21. State whether you mean CSF or serum RPR titre or both.

Methods. I think the hyphen between CSF-RPR is confusing as it resembles a negative sign. I suggest you delete it and use CSF RPR- and CSF RPR+. P.6 line 7. Delete the speech marks.

Results. P. 8. Lines 1-5. As in the abstract it takes a lot of effort to understand what you're saying here. The phrase "the response to 4-fold decline in" is confusing. I think you mean this: In CSF RPR+ patients, the CSF RPR titre declined four-fold in 85% (11/13) and the serum RPR declined four-fold in only 46% (6/13), odds ratio 6.4 (95% confidence interval 1-41.2).

Are the methods appropriate and well described?
If not, please specify what is required in your comments to the authors.

Yes

Does the work include the necessary controls?
If not, please specify which controls are required in your comments to the authors.

Yes

Are the 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.
I am able to assess the statistics

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

Needs some language corrections before being published

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