Reviewer’s report

Title: Tolerability of IM Penicillin G Benzathine Diluted or not with Local Anesthetics, or Different Gauge Needles for Syphilis Treatment: A Randomized Clinical Trial

Version: 1 Date: 10 May 2019

Reviewer: David Lawrence

Reviewer's report:

This is a very novel and interesting study that compared different administration modalities of benzathine penicillin G for early syphilis, with the objective of determining if co-administering local anaesthetic or using different gauge needles had an impact on pain.

I have a few minor points for the authors:

1. When calculating sample size you expected a mean pain intensity of 7.6 in the 19G without anaesthetic and 8.6 in the 21G without anaesthetic but in reality you saw much lower levels of pain (5.56 and 5.06 respectively). Can you comment on this?

2. Do you have outcome data for these patients? i.e. did a similar number have serological cure / serofast / increase in titers. I ask simply because you mention previous studies in MDRTB that have found co-administration with anaesthetic did not impact effectiveness.

3. Figure 2 - could you consider also adding graphical representation comparing all participants with anaesthetic versus all without?

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:

Acceptable

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Nil

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