Reviewer's report

Title: Cryptococcal antigenemia is associated with meningitis or death in HIV-infected adults with CD4 100-200 cells/mm3

Version: 0 Date: 15 Nov 2019

Reviewer: Shetty Ravi Dyavar

Reviewer's report:

In this manuscript titled, "Cryptococcal antigenemia is associated with meningitis or death in HIV-infected adults with CD4 100-200 cells/mm3", Wykowski et al demonstrated the rate of cryptococcal antigen among people living with HIV in South Africa. The authors showed that among HIV infected persons with 100-200 CD4 T cells/mm3 with tested CrAg data, 2 of 4 individuals tested positive for CrAg were developed meningitis and 11 of 205 developed meningitis in CrAg-ve persons. Among HIV infected persons, seven of 10 CrAg+ve persons were developed meningitis and 26 of 169 CrAg-ve persons living with HIV developed meningitis. This is an interesting and clinically important study. I have the following comments to improve the quality of the manuscript.

Major Comments:

1) The authors showed the persons developed Meningitis due to Cryptococcal infections. Among HIV infected persons with 100-200 or &lt;100 CD4 T cell counts per mm3, are there any other opportunistic infections. If so, authors may need to check the mortality rate among those infected with cryptococcal infection along with other opportunistic infections or exclusively with cryptococcal infections. Due to loss of immunity among HIV infected persons with &lt;100 CD4 T cell counts, tuberculosis infection is very common among these individuals. Were they tested for tuberculosis infection. Did it contribute to the mortality rate? These are very important questions that needs to be addressed to detail.

Minor Comments:

1) The manuscript has several language errors and need to be corrected.

2) The font size of labels on the x and y axes need to be increased.

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

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