Reviewer's report

Title: Neuromyelitis optica spectrum disorders with non-organ-specific autoimmune diseases and with organ-specific autoimmune diseases

Version: 2 Date: 1 June 2014

Reviewer: Adam Handel

Reviewer's report:

The authors report clinical, laboratory and imaging characteristics of NMO patients with organ- or non-organ-specific autoimmune disorders in a relatively small cohort. The article concludes that there are few differences between NMO patients with organ- and non-organ-specific autoimmune disorders. My comments are below:

Major compulsory revisions:
1. There are multiple grammatical mistakes throughout the manuscript which should be corrected.
2. Since the authors use small cohorts of patients, they should include power calculations for their ability to detect differences between the cohorts.
3. The authors should expand on why they chose to look specifically at the two subgroups of patients that they report here and precisely how these groups are defined.
4. The authors should include the data on NMO patients without co-morbid autoimmune disorders (i.e. the 132 patients excluded from this study) to allow the reader to draw conclusions related to the importance of patients having autoimmune disorders in addition to underlying NMO.
5. How can the authors be sure that any differences observed (particularly related to auto-antibody frequency) are not simply due to the non-organ-specific autoimmune disease and unrelated to the NMO diagnosis?
6. In figure 1 the numbers do not add up (170 patients are at the top and those without co-morbid autoimmune disease are not shown as being excluded in this).

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: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

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