Reviewer's report

Title: A misdiagnosed rickettsia infected patient presented with multiple cerebral infarctions and hemorrhage

Version: 2
Date: 7 April 2015

Reviewer: Marina Eremeeva

Reviewer's report:

Unfortunately, as written, the manuscript does not contain enough convincing information to support the conclusions reached by the authors. The following issues should be addressed by the authors to improve the quality of the manuscript which requires a major revision:

1. It is possible that the patient indeed suffered from a rickettsial disease as determined by seroconversion; however, the details of this etiological diagnosis are missing and should be included in the manuscript. In particular, the authors need to describe what diagnostic test was used and what antigen(s) were used, and on what days after onset of symptoms, the serum samples were collected for testing.

2. Presence of an eschar is not typical for endemic typhus and suggests instead a spotted fever group rickettsiosis. Since the authors claimed that the presence of R. mooseri (sic R. typhi) DNA was confirmed by sequencing, the source of DNA, timing of sample collection and method of detection (including specific primers used) should be reported in the manuscript. Nucleotide sequence of the fragment detected should be submitted to GeneBank and the accession number included in the manuscript.

3. Specify the location of possible exposure of the patient – is it somewhere in Hangzhou Province or elsewhere? Specify the time of year when the patient became ill.

4. Term “R. mooseri” is an archaic name for Rickettsia typhi and is not used in modern literature. Please, replace.

5. Update information regarding the current knowledge of rickettsial diseases in China; the sources cited were published in 1987 and 1987, and are badly outdated.

6. Last but not least, the article needs to be edited by someone who speaks English as their first language.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Not suitable for publication unless extensively edited

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.
Declaration of competing interests:

No competing interests