Reviewer’s report

Title: Neuropsychological and cerebral morphometric aspects of negative symptoms in schizophrenia. Negative symptomatology is associated with specific mnemonic deficits in schizophrenic patients

Version: 4 Date: 26 April 2014

Reviewer: Nicola Dusi

Reviewer’s report:

Strength:
Thorough neuropsychological characterization
Link between neuropsychological functions and brain areas implicated in those functions

Weaknesses:
Small sample
Patients and healthy controls are not one by one matched
Distinction of the groups by the median value of SANS score

Major Revision:
The greatest limitation of the study is the dichotomous division of the patients' sample based on SANS median value. You addressed the issue in the last chapter of your publication. I suggest few ways to overcome this limitation (you don’t have to answer to all of them but I would consider one of this options):
1- You discuss thoroughly why you didn’t choose to consider that variable as a continuous one.
2- In the introduction, you point out that negative symptomatology is related to outcome measures, prognosis, and treatment response. But, first your work focuses more on neuropsychological features than on clinical ones, second, the 2 schizophrenic samples don’t seem to present any other clinical or outcome difference, except for SANS score. So, you could skip or reduce those paragraphs in the introduction (basically page 5) that underlie the clinical relevance of negative symptoms, and you could focus primarily on the neuropsychological aspects of schizophrenia and the implication of negative symptoms on that. Otherwise you should support the reason way you chose to divide the schizophrenia group in two groups based on the median value of SANS, from a clinical point of view, adding few more data that differentiate the two samples. For example you mentioned the GAS and BPRS; you could add them.

Minor concerns:
There are few typos to look at; for example:
- Page 5. Line 6. “has” >>> have
- Page 5. Line 9. “.” missing at the end of the sentence

**Level of interest:** An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

**Statistical review:** Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests