Reviewer’s report

Title: Type specific Real time PCR for detection of human herpes virus 6 in schizophrenia and bipolar patients: a case control study

Version: 3 Date: 16 July 2015

Reviewer: Keely Cheslack-Postava

Reviewer’s report:

- Major Compulsory Revisions

1. Line 64-66. Reference #6 is a study on detection of HHV6 in CSF from children admitted to the ER with encephalitis symptoms. A more appropriate reference for the percent of the general population infected should be substituted.

2. Line 70-71. More explanation and reference(s) should be given for the statement “Nowadays the number of disease associated with HHV-6 infection is increasing” (And it should read “diseases”)

3. Methods. Season of birth is mentioned in the results but not the methods. Also, the reason for discussing season of birth should be clarified. Presumably, this would affect viral exposure prenatally or soon after birth; however, this study measured viral exposure in adulthood.

4. Line 171-173. This statement is not supported by any references or the current study.

5. Lines 207-208. It is not clear how the results of this study lead to these recommendations.

6. Very few subjects overall (N=3) were positive, therefore, it is difficult to draw conclusions from this study and it was clearly underpowered. The authors should discuss what they hypothesize to be the relevant time window of exposure to the virus with regard to disease status, and how this relates to what was measured in this cross-sectional study. Perhaps a different time point in life or disease history is more relevant for risk of SCZ/BD?

- Minor Essential Revisions

7. Table 2. Please clarify whether tests of significance refer to all cases vs. controls or to SC vs. BD vs. controls.

8. Line 144-145. “One hundred copies of viral DNA were detected in the positive samples.” This statement should be explained.

9. Minor grammatical editing/proofreading is needed throughout. Examples:
10. Methods: What were the specific DSM-IV diagnostic codes included under each of the diagnoses?

Level of interest: An article of limited interest

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.