Reviewer’s report

Title: An unusual case of acute lupus haemophagocytic syndrome: a test of diagnostic criteria

Version: 0 Date: 01 Jan 2017

Reviewer: Valirie Agbor

Reviewer's report:

Generally, the authors report a case of acute lupus haemophagocytic syndrome. A rare but interesting entity with chronology in the diagnosis and management. This work adds more evidence to the concept of cytokine mediated response in the pathogenesis of ALHS. I'll like to address a few worries I had with the paper.

1) ALL definitions should be defined at first use

2) The authors should avoid using abbreviations in the abstract as much as possible.

3) Background section of main text
   a) P1,L4: Avoid starting a sentence with an abbreviation, please correct through.
   b) P3,L2: Delete the comma before 'liver function abnormalities'
   c) P3,L3: Do well to list the clinical manifestations of HLH before the paraclinicals. Hence, let 'weight loss' come before 'liver function abnormality'

4) Case presentation section of the main text
   a) P1,L2: Replace "history of on and off fever of three months with loss of appetite and loss of weight..." with "three months history of intermittent fever, anorexia and weight loss"
   b) P1,L3: Replace "Initially the fever had been there for around two days every week but it had progressively worsened and by the time of admission, she had daily fever spikes." with "A worsening of the fever characterized by daily episodes with spikes prompted admission."
   c) P1, L13-18: should read "She complained of significant hair loss and on and off confusional episodes over the last two weeks, but denied symptoms of focal infections including respiratory symptoms. Also, she disaffirmed any history of arthritis and features of autoimmune diseases such as photosensitive rashes, oral ulcers or symptoms of Raynaud's phenomenon."
d) P1, L9: Please give the patient's vital parameters.

e) P2L1: Did you have a tentative diagnosis and differentials before requesting for paraclinical exams? If yes, please list them.

f) P3,L3: What do you mean by "infective screen"? FBC, ESR and CRP also screen for infections. Also, you said she denied any respiratory symptom. That means cough included. How did you obtain sputum sample for culture?

g) P3,L4: Delete "... and there was no sign of infection". If the Chest X-ray was normal, then automatically, there was no sign of infection on chest x-ray.

h) P4,L1: Dimensional not dimentional. Correct accordingly

i) P6,L1: Negative not negaive. Please correct that.

j) P7,L3: At what frequency did she receive prednisolone? Aside prednisolone, did she receive any other treatment worth mentioning?

k) P8, L1: Please endeavour to write numbers less than 10 in words.

l) P8,L2: Replace "and readmitted" with "which motivated a second admission."

m) P9: Was there any follow up visits after the treatment with oral prednisolone and mycophenolate mofetil?

5) Conclusion section of the main text

a) You are discussing and not concluding. Please separate the discussion from the conclusion section.

b) P5,L4: Correct "has" to have.

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An article of importance in its field

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