Reviewer’s report

Title: Disease Activity Flares and Pain Flares in an early rheumatoid arthritis inception cohort; characteristics, antecedents and sequelae

Version: 0 Date: 01 Aug 2019

Reviewer: Tuulikki Sokka-Isler

Reviewer's report:

Flares are being investigated in the famous longitudinal ERAN cohort. This work is very important and reflects daily clinical practice that disease activity and pain do not always go together. Comments & questions to follow:

- Did you calculate DAS28 also with 3 variables, namely without patient global (PtGl)? PtGl is strongly associated with pain and fatigue and therefore would be interesting to see whether the two flares would be even more discordant using this variable.

- Did you find any differences in the patterns of the flares in seropositive vs negative patients? - Keeping in mind that in long run, seronegative "RA" may turn out to be various diagnoses (Paalanen et al. Clin Exp Rheumatol. 2019 Jan-Feb;37(1):37-43).

Are the methods appropriate and well described?
If not, please specify what is required in your comments to the authors.

Yes

Does the work include the necessary controls?
If not, please specify which controls are required in your comments to the authors.

Yes

Are the conclusions drawn adequately supported by the data shown?
If not, please explain in your comments to the authors.

Yes

Are you able to assess any statistics in the manuscript or would you recommend an additional statistical review?
If an additional statistical review is recommended, please specify what aspects require further assessment in your comments to the editors.

I am able to assess the statistics
Quality of written English
Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

Acceptable

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