Reviewer’s report

Title: Evaluation of symptomatic slow-acting drugs in osteoarthritis using the GRADE system

Version: 2 Date: 22 August 2008

Reviewer: Burkhard Leeb

Reviewer’s report:

The clarity and the quality of the manuscript has increased after revision. However, the importance of Glucosamin sulfate is still somewhat overestimated, given the effect sizes the authors themselves report in the paper. Literature evidence is still overweighted within the manuscript to my opinion. The reader will not get an impression about the individual author’s rating strong or weak. A table giving the individual ratings for the respective compounds anonymously would allow the reader to have information about experts’ opinion.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

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

Declaration of competing interests:

Dr. Leeb has received consultancy fees from TRB Chemedica, and IBSA, he also was the author of a report submitted to EMEA for approval of a hyaluronic acid preparation manufactured by CSC-Pharma. Furthermore he acts as national Austrian coordinator of the POLKA-trial (Strontium ranelate in osteoarthritis). Dr. Leeb was a member of the EULAR task forces for the recommendations for management of knee and hip OA, he was the co-convenor of the EULAR task forces for recommendations for diagnosis and management of hand OA, and currently is a member of the EULAR task force for recommendations for the diagnosis of knee OA.