Reviewer's report

Title: Sciatic lateral popliteal block with clonidine alone or clonidine plus 0.2% ropivacaine: effect on the intra- and postoperative analgesia for lower extremity surgery in children. A randomized prospective controlled study

Version: 2 Date: 30 June 2011

Reviewer: Arjunan Ganesh

Reviewer's report:

Minor essential revisions:

1) Page 6, para 1: "An additional femoral ...mid-thigh." I think that the main use of the femoral nerve block in foot and ankle cases is to cover the saphenous distribution (although a saphenous block can accomplish the same). Tourniquet pain is mainly ischemic and not effectively block with a low concentration block. Also, if one needs to completely block the tourniquet area, the posterior cutaneous nerve of the thigh needs to be blocked as well.

2) Page 7, last para: What do you mean by failed sciatic block in the control group?

3) Page 8, last para: How did you assess tourniquet pain and differentiate it from surgical pain?

Discretionary revisions:

1) Page 9, penultimate para: I am surprised that none of your patients developed any degree of motor block. We perform this block very often without clonidine and with lower concentrations of ropivacaine (0.15%) and experience even complete motor blockade sometimes

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

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.