Reviewer's report

Title: Pulse Wave Velocity and Carotid Atherosclerosis in White and Latino Patients with Hypertension

Version: 1 Date: 1 January 2011

Reviewer: Therese Tillin

Reviewer's report:

This is a cross-sectional study of associations between various markers of cardiovascular disease and carotid intima-media thickness as a measure of atherosclerosis in a mixed Latino and White non-Latino US safety-net population. Given the known ethnic group differences in cardiovascular events and mortality and the uncertainties as to mechanisms underlying these ethnic differences, this is an important area of study.

The authors have explained their rationale and objectives clearly and this is a well written paper. I have a few questions and comments

- it is not clear how participants were selected (consecutively? how many declined etc?)

- how was your sample size of 177 arrived at?

- although you state that you found no interactions between ethnicity and associations between PWV and CIMT etc, your cutpoint of $p<0.05$ for interactions seems rather stringent in a relatively small sample and it would be helpful to have some indication of whether there was any indication of interaction, even if not statistically significant at the 0.05 level- since your key interest appears to lie in ethnic group differences. I would welcome further exploration in general of ethnic differences in these associations, but appreciate that the study is underpowered for this

- it may be helpful to show standardised regression coefficients for your CV risk markers in order to enable a more straightforward comparison.

- Although you show a strong independent association between ankle-brachial PWV and CIMT, I'd prefer to see some consideration of carotid-femoral PWV for future study given that ankle-brachial PWV combines both elastic and muscular arteries and most authors admit that carotid-femoral PWV is more strongly associated with markers of atherosclerosis (and it's not difficult to measure)

- Given the increasing body of evidence that CRP adds little to conventional risk assessment or management, you could perhaps afford to emphasise more strongly the absence of association between CRP and CIMT in this bi-ethnic population.

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:
I have no competing interests