Reviewer’s report

Title: Utility of NT-proBNP as a rule-out test for left ventricular dysfunction in very old people with limiting dyspnoea: the Newcastle 85+ Study

Version: 3 Date: 27 August 2014

Reviewer: Andrew Ludman

Reviewer’s report:

The authors are to be congratulated for completing an interesting study in a patient group that is difficult to study. The results add importantly to the body of literature available on NP use. There are limitations, but these are covered appropriately in the relevant section. The conclusions are appropriate.

Discretionary revisions

Abstract Line 33: I would suggest adding a final more explicit sentence (if word limit allows) suggesting that clinicians consider proceeding direct to echocardiography in the very old in the investigation of limiting dyspnoea thought to potentially be HF.

Line 56: Suggest amend to ‘…50% of HF in people over the age…’
Line 277: Suggest delete the repeated ‘in the old’ at the end of this sentence.

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 declare that I have no competing interests