Reviewer's report

Title: Scarcity of atrial fibrillation in a traditional African population: a population-based study

Version: 2 Date: 3 March 2014

Reviewer: jan heeringa

Reviewer's report:

My previous remark (nr 2) is not satisfactorily addressed to in this rebuttal. The case finding in the study under consideration is definitely not comparable to the case ascertainment in the ATRIA study. The case finding is based on EKG measurement only. In the ATRIA study the diagnosis is based on searches in clinical databases from ambulatory visits, in an electrocardiographic database and on searches in a hospital discharges diagnosis databases. Both approaches have their own limitations, but it must be clear that the results of the ATRIA study will give a better approximation of the real prevalence of atrial fibrillation in the general population than the study of Koopman et al. The remarks with respect to transient atrial fibrillation (lines 282-290) do not solve this problem. Transient atrial fibrillation is a disturbing conception. It is quite well defined in the ATRIA paper but explains only partially the missing cases due to EKG measurements only. The case ascertainment in the study of Koopmans is a real limitation and has to be qualified as such. But it does not affect the interesting conclusions of the paper.

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