Reviewer's report

Title: The morbidity and mortality following a diagnosis of peripheral arterial disease: Long term follow-up of a large database

Version: 3 Date: 29 March 2005

Reviewer: Deepak L Bhatt

Reviewer’s report:

General

This paper presents data on outcomes of patients with peripheral arterial disease from the Saskatchewan province of Canada. They are found to have event rates similar to patients with myocardial infarction or stroke, illustrating the high risk of patients with peripheral arterial disease. These findings can be generalized to populations throughout the world.

The major limitation is the lack of data on risk factors such as smoking, or laboratory tests such as cholesterol levels. However, as the authors acknowledge, this cannot be avoided with administrative data. Similarly, it would have been useful to be able to analyze patterns of medication utilization to assess the degree of under-treatment of peripheral arterial disease and perhaps examine trends over time.

Nevertheless, this large comparative data set of outcomes in patients with peripheral arterial disease, myocardial infarction, or stroke is quite valuable in providing real world estimates of ischemic event rates.

Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)

none

Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)

1. In order to minimize confusion, the legend for Figure 1 should be arranged in the same order as the lines in the graph itself.
2. On page 13, dependent is misspelled.

Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

none

What next?: Accept after minor essential revisions

Level of interest: An article of outstanding merit and interest in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No
Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests