Reviewer's report

Title: Spinal Cord Stimulation in the Treatment of Refractory Angina: Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis of Randomised Controlled Trials

Version: 1 Date: 16 October 2008

Reviewer: Udho Thadani

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Authors have defined refractory angina " reversible ischemia in the presence of CAD, which cannot be adequately controlled by a combination of medical therapy, angioplasty or coronary bypass operations."

Methods used and data search and evaluation of studies are appropriate.

One major concern is that the Authors have included ESBY trial, the largest study in their report which compares SCS to coronary bypass surgery. Inclusion of this trial does not conform to the definition of refractory angina as patients were considered to be suitable for bypass surgery! Authors need to provide rationale for including this trial in their analysis.

The trials comparing SCS on and off are open to criticism and have a total of 90 patients from four different studies. Therefore the positive conclusions of efficacy of SCS in the abstract need to be softened.

Authors are correct in that a RCT trial is needed.