Reviewer’s report

Title: Gastrointestinal failure in intensive care: a retrospective clinical study in three different intensive care units in Germany and Estonia.

Version: 5 Date: 6 May 2006

Reviewer: Bekele Afessa

Reviewer’s report:

General
I congratulate the authors for their excellent work in revising the manuscript. They have responded to all my comments satisfactorily. I have few minor suggestions.

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

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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 their response to my comment, the authors have detailed the 47 variables that were analyzed. These variables should be mentioned in the methods section of the manuscript.

2. In the results section of the manuscript, describe which 23 of the 47 variables were associated with GIV by univariate analysis. Such information will help future research.

3. The study shows that the development of GIF was an independent risk factor for mortality. The authors performed multiple logistic regression analysis with a model including APACHE II, SOFA and GIF. In the Results section, they summarized the results of the logistic regression analysis as "true-positives", "true-negatives" and "overall correct". Since the study’s main contribution is describing association nor real prediction, I suggest deleting the prediction part of the analysis. Table 2 clearly describes the odds ratio with the 95% confidence intervals of the variables (APACHE, SOFA and GIF) that were entered in the model. Adding the P value for each variable will be important.

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Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

What next?: Accept after minor essential revisions

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No

Declaration of competing interests:
I declare that I have no competing interests.