Reviewer’s report

Title: Oesophageal Varices, Schistosomiasis, and Mortality among Patients Admitted with Haematemesis in Mwanza, Tanzania: a Prospective Cohort Study

Version: 1 Date: 14 February 2014

Reviewer: Lucas Cavallaro

Reviewer’s report:

In this interesting prospective cohort study, the authors enrolled all the adults admitted with hematemesis and observed that 48% of the patients had active schistosomiasis. Moreover, they reported a strong association between esophageal varices and demographic (waters sourced from the lake) or clinical findings (portal vein diameter, splenomegaly). These factors could address patients to undertake both upper GI endoscopy and empirical treatment for schistosomiasis. These interventions could reduce UGIB morbidity and mortality.

MAJOR REVISION

1) The authors were aimed to determine UGIB etiologies (see the end of introduction). As you can see in figure, esophageal varices was the first cause of UGIB. However, hematemesis is only one of the clinical manifestations of UGIB (other than melaena or coffee ground vomiting). Enrolling only patients with hematemesis could select more patients with esophageal varices) leading to a selection bias.

MINOR REVISIONS

1) English language should be revised

2) the authors could also evaluate the association between cardiovascular features (such as blood pressure, pulse, orthostatic change) or the need of blood transfusion and the presence of esophageal varices.

4) Statistics: the authors applied a regression logistic model (see abstract) but they did not mention it (see data analysis paragraph)

5) The authors assessed splenomegaly by a clinical examination. However, they should carefully assess it by ultrasound examination.

6) How are the endoscopical features of uremic syndrome? (see figure)

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being
Statistical review: Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have not conflict of interest.