Reviewer's report

Title: Clinical Manifestations and Outcome in Staphylococcus aureus Endocarditis Among Injection Drug Users and Nonaddicts - A Prospective Study of 74 Patients

Version: 1 Date: 28 June 2006

Reviewer: Kate Gould

Reviewer's report:

General
Good research papers regarding endocarditis are few and far between and are desperately needed. Unfortunately I do not think that this paper adds anything to what is already known about the subject. The research appears to have started out as an antibiotic trial, but appears to have metaphorphosed into a review of Clinical presentation and outcomes. The authors appear to have covered a lot of issues, outwith the remit of the title of their paper. Is this a review of Staph aureus bacteraemia or Staph aureus endocarditis? The antibiotic therapeutic regimens appear to be very varied, with no indications given by the authors for how the antibiotic choices were made. It would be tempting to suggest that the antibiotic data should be excluded, however it would be very difficult to look meaningfully at outcomes if this data was not available.

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Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)
I would suggest that the paper should be re-written as a review of Staph aureus bacteraemia, with endocarditis as one of the possible outcomes. If the antibiotic treatment data is to be included, it would be helpful if there was some indication of the rationale behind the choice of therapy. The Tables contain too much information and could be condensed considerably. More detail is required about the bacteriological testing methods.

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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)

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Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

What next?: Reject because scientifically unsound

Level of interest: An article of limited interest

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No

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