Reviewer's report

Title: Superficial and deep sternal wound infection after more than 9000 coronary artery bypass graft (CABG): incidence, risk factors and mortality

Version: 2 Date: 22 June 2007

Reviewer: Örjan Friberg

Reviewer's report:

General
The authors have improved the manuscript substantially. Especially the multivariable risk factor analysis is now better described.

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

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

Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)
I am still confused about how the authors use the El Oakley-classification. This classification is best suited to evaluate the best method to treat a patient with mediastinitis (muscular/omental flap vs only irrigation etc), but it can confuse the reader in this context, since type IV (8 out of 21 cases) means (to me) that the patient presents with deep SWI for the second(or third) time. I.e. the first time a patient presents with mediastinitis it cannot, by definition, be a type IV. I suppose that the first (type III) mediastinitis in these patients are not included among the reported type III??

I would also welcome a more explicit acknowledgment in the discussion of the obvious limitations of the study, especially regarding the lack of power to detect (or rule out) effects of different risk-factors or different antibiotic regimens. Also, as with all retrospective analyses, the obvious risk of having a false low incidence of complications recorded in such a database (data were entered by general practitioners!) might be mentioned.

What next?: Accept after discretionary revisions

Level of interest: An article of limited interest

Quality of written English: Acceptable
**Statistical review:** No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests