Reviewer's report

Title: A simplified clinical prediction score of chronic kidney disease: A cross-sectional-survey study

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Reviewer: Micah Thorp

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Dr Thakkinstian and colleagues have produced a simple, easy to use method to assess whether or not a patient might be at risk of CKD. The score may prove beneficial in developing countries where serological tests and electronic medical records are less available than in the developed world. In most of the developed world, serum creatinine testing is cheap and ubiquitous and the score is of minimal clinical value.

While there are some specific copy-editing issues, the paper is generally well written. The statistical methodology is appropriate, though I think using cubic splines to assess potential variables is more meaningful than simple regression. While it is convention to use the MDRD equation to assess estimated GFR, the equation suffers when GFRs are greater than 40-50. MDRD is still the most commonly applied equation, it is rapidly being replaced by the CKD-EPI equation, which decreases misclassification. The use of cubic splines and CKD-EPI equation would be helpful, but should not disqualify this paper from publication.

There are some enhancements that should be addressed prior to publication:

1) Present more information about internal validation. You might try a c-statistic for the highest risk group.
2) I would add a table with an “example patient”. That will help inform the reader how the score might be applied.
3) Make sure you point out what this risk score isn’t: It does not predict ESRD or CKD progression. Roughly two thirds of patients with CKD don’t progress, so simply finding the disease of only modest clinical benefit. Those using it have to decide what (if anything) to do next…..
4) There needs to be some more discussion about the limitation of this study. For example there is no external validation for this score, there may have been some selection bias in the initial patient selection, etc. It is unclear whether this score might be usable in another population.

Overall this is an interesting study and, in my view, worthy of publication pending some enhancements.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field
Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being published

Statistical review: Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.

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