Reviewer’s report

Title: The impact of pretransplant 25-hydroxy vitamin D deficiency on subsequent graft function: An observational study

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Reviewer: Kyra Borchhardt

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Hyunwook Kim et al describe interesting observations regarding graft function of 131 kidney transplant recipients after 36 months and pretransplant vitamin d deficiency.

Although the results and work are important and should be published there are major issues that should be discussed/changed or described in more detail:

Methods: The patient flow should be documented. How many patients received a kidney graft during that time period? How many recipients lost graft or went back to dialysis, or were lost to follow up. How many patients were excluded for given reasons et cetera. I suggest providing a figure.

Results: Concomitant therapy of patients is no result- this belongs into the patient- methods section. There should also be an explanation why patients received one or the other drug. Bisphosphonates aren’t supplements. Patients receiving vitamin d supplements should be excluded from the study, as we neither do not know their increase in 25-OHD post-transplant nor its impact on graft function, that however is key.

Patients were divided into two groups regarding 25-OHD concentrations. The patient population itself is very inhomogen as it seems you have patients with hypocalcaemia due to sec. hyperparathyroidism in preemptive KT patients- but also malnutrition in other patients with long term chronic dialysis. Please use therefore the albumin corrected calcium.

Predominant RRT modality was associated with 25-OHD levels. Could there be a bias in patient collective for CAPD? Is there a negative selection bias? This should at least discussed.

Acute rejection episodes were defined clinically and biopsy proven? Did you distinguish between rejection episodes successful treated versus sine effectu, or the type and severity of rejection? Please discuss.

There is an ongoing RCT investigating this issue. Should be mentioned (Thiem et al, Trials 2009)

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field
Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.

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