Reviewer's report

Title: Timing of preemptive vascular access placement: do we understand the natural history of advanced CKD?: an observational study

Version: 1 Date: 28 March 2013

Reviewer: Rafael Ponikvar

Reviewer's report:

General comment:

The questions posed by the authors are well defined. The methods are appropriate and well described. The data are sound. The discussion and conclusions are well balanced and supported by the data. The limitations of the work are clearly stated. The title and the abstract accurately convey what has been found. The manuscript is well written.

According to the data revealed in the article it seems that it is not a heresy to begin with renal replacement therapy at lower eGFR than suggested in the literature and guidelines. Every native AV fistula could and should mature at least within 2 months, if not there were damaged arteries (atherosclerotic and calcified) and veins (flebitic) which will never recover and therefore AV fistula can not mature and other solutions should be sought. Preoperative mapping is essential in creating and in planning vascular access. In our department we usually create a new AV fistula 2-3 months before RRT. We do not create preemptive AV grafts because of their shorter lifespan compared to AV fistulae and greater possibility of clotting before having been used. RRT usually begins at eGFR bellow 10 ml/ min. It was also our impression that the decline of kidney function in patients with functioning AV fistula was slower compared to patients without a fistula.

Major Compulsory Revisions: none

Minor Essential Revisions:
1. references no 3 and 10 are missing, in the reference no 18 ..et al.. should be omitted
2. How many AV fistulas and grafts clotted in the first year before having been used and if did what was the rescue approach?

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

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