Reviewer's report

Title: Warfarin Use in Hemodialysis Patients with Atrial Fibrillation: Decisions based on Uncertainty

Version: 3 Date: 22 February 2013

Reviewer: Simonetta Genovesi

Reviewer's report:

The Authors have answered my requests partially and I think other modifications to the manuscript are necessary before its publication. More specifically, I believe that the Authors should change the Discussion following the suggestions that I made and that the Authors themselves affirmed to approve.

Major Compulsory Revisions

1) The Discussion should deal with the fact that a possible RCT on the use of warfarin in patients on HD with AF should be financed by public funds and that this could be a problem, at least in many countries, such as Italy. Maybe not in Canada, however.

2) The Discussion should report points 2 and 3 (major revisions) of the Authors’ replies. In my opinion it is particularly important to clearly emphasize the ethical problems that would originate from the definition of a protocol for a RCT on this issue. If this aspect is not addressed the manuscript could be at risk of giving ambiguous information, by suggesting that the problem can easily be resolved by the performance of a controlled study, without underlining the important difficulties of the realization of such a study.

Minor Essential Revisions

I do not agree with the Authors’ affirmations on the study by Olesen. Even if patients on HD were a minority, the study still shows that in these patients treatment with warfarin reduces the incidence of stroke without increasing bleeding risk. In fact, the increased Odds Ratio of bleeding in patients with renal failure is accounted for by the patients with non-terminal chronic renal failure who are not on dialysis treatment.

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'