Reviewer’s report

Title: The correlates of urinary albumin to creatinine ratio (ACR) in a high risk Australian Aboriginal community

Version: 2 Date: 25 February 2013

Reviewer: Paul Komenda

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Wang et al. provide here a study correlating demographic and clinical parameters with urinary ACR in a high risk aboriginal community from Australia.

Urinary ACR is a well-accepted risk factors for mortality and morbidity such as kidney failure. It is a modifiable risk factor for targeted intervention such as blood pressure control and RAAS inhibition.

This study is part of a larger screening study performed in the mid 90’s by the co-authors. I believe the statistical methods to be used of reasonable quality and I have no issue with the methodology.

I have some concerns with this paper as written:

1) (MAJOR) There does not appear to be a well-articulated research question or hypothesis in the introduction. It reads somewhat like a "fishing expedition" for parameters that correlate with Urine ACR. Please provide a concise research question and hypothesis in the introduction.

2) (MINOR) The introduction reads more like a discussion in parts. The paper could be strengthened by moving other studies that have correlated Urine ACR with some parameters (paragraph2). Focus on the introduction instead, on building the case why this is important, and stating a testable hypothesis.

3) (MAJOR) These data were collected 10-15 years ago. Why is it being published only now? The discussion states that studies are now ongoing to link findings of the screening study with outcomes - this should be tied into the premise of the paper somehow. Why not have this paper connect to the outcomes paper in a more formal way?

4) A significant number of risk prediction equations now exist for kidney failure incorporating GFR, Urine ACR, etc....Tying some of these in to the the discussion may help frame this paper better (Tangri et al, JAMA 2012).

I would be happy to review a revision of this paper with a more focused question as to why all of these correlations are important?

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests
Quality of written English: Acceptable

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