Reviewer’s report

Title: Decrease in shunt volume in patients with cryptogenic stroke and patent foramen ovale

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Reviewer: Regina Feurer

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Tanislav et al. carried out a study on 102 stroke patients with RLS, in whom volume of RLS at the time of hospital admission for stroke was compared with the RLS volume on follow-up. The conclusions of the authors were that RLS volume decreases over time, especially in patients with cryptogenic stroke and that these temporal dynamics may influence strategies in the management of secondary stroke prevention in patients with PFO.

The study is interesting and was a pleasure for me to read and review as, according to my opinion, it can be considered as a valuable contribution to the ongoing debate on how to manage secondary stroke prevention in patients with PFO.

The study design is well-structured, TEE-and c-TCD-protocols elaborated, results are presented clearly, distinct conclusions are drawn.

I have only one remark concerning the median time between the index event TO for stroke and T1 for follow-up measurement (10 months), which seems rather short to me. It would be interesting to know what will happen to the same cohort of patients over a period of a couple of years.

Nevertheless, data and presentation seemed persuasive to me, so that I do not have any major or minor revisions.

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.