Reviewer's report

Title: Preeclampsia and long-term risk of cardiovascular disease: what do obstetrician-gynecologists know?

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Reviewer: Ulrich Pecks

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In the present study “PREECLAMPSIA AND LONG-TERM RISK OF CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASE: WHAT DO OBSTETRICIAN-GYNECOLOGISTS KNOW?” the authors aimed to evaluate whether obstetrician-gynaecologists in a north-western part of Germany have knowledge about the association of preeclampsia (PE) and future cardiovascular diseases (CVD). Moreover, the authors addressed the question whether knowledge of the current national guideline for the treatment of patients with PE impacts the physician’s behaviour. The authors found that most practitioners are familiar with the association and counselled patients accordingly. However, only about the half of practitioners knew about the guideline. Those who knew the current guideline significantly more often stated to counsel and observe patients for CVD when patients had a history of PE.

The authors concluded that further academic training, as well as continuing education is needed.

First, I would like to congratulate for the idea to conduct a study on this interesting topic. The study aim is crystal clear and the study design is straight. Since decades it is known that CVD have an enormous impact on health economics, and many strategies have been implemented to reduce the incidence of CVD. By now it has become evident that a history of PE is an independent risk factor for the development of CVD and counselling patients accordingly can be internationally regarded as state of the art. The present study therefore is particularly important to get an overview about the efficiency of current continuing education strategies and implementation of guidelines in the German health care system with the focus on PE and future CVD.

I principally recommend for publication. However, I suggest discretionary revisions:

abstract:

1. The sentence “The majority of the respondents were female (65.9%).” implies that male gynaecologists do not reply that often. However, the number (65.9%) has to be adjusted for the total number of male/ female gynaecologists that have been contacted. I suggest omitting the sentence since it is redundant with regard to the initial question.

introduction:
2. The incidence of preeclampsia is 2 to 5 % only. Please correct it.

3. According to the national guidelines blood pressure monitoring should be performed post partum till normalization of the blood pressure. An exact time point is not defined. Please correct it.

methods:
4. please indicate the total number of obstetrician-gynaecologists working as practitioners in the Lower Saxony, if possible. Please describe in more detail on which basis the 500 physicians were elected to be contacted to take part at the study.

results and discussion:
5. no concerns

Conclusions:
6. One of the main messages of the study is that practitioners that stated to know the current guideline are more aware of the association between PE and CVD, and patients are advised and treated accordingly. Since this underlines the impact of guidelines on physician’s behaviour and treatment strategies I suggest emphasizing this in the conclusion part.

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