Reviewer's report

Title: Exeter total hip replacements 654 primary prosthesis, with a maximum follow-up of 20 years

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Reviewer: Stein Atle Lie

Level of interest: A paper whose findings are important to those with closely related interests

Advice on publication: Unable to decide on acceptance or rejection until the authors have responded to the compulsory revisions

Specific comments:
This paper has improved after the corrections suggested by the two referees, but there still are some potentially confusing points.

Murray et al. [10] also mention death as a potential problem related to loss to follow-up. In your article you found that revision risk decrease with age. This might very well be partly explained by loss to follow-up for the prostheses from elderly patients. If an old patient have a lose prosthesis, but dies before the reoperation takes place, this prosthesis should have been operated, but instead are
lost to follow-up at the time of death for the patient. Results for prostheses from old patients might therefore be worse than observed. Dependencies between failures and censored observations are a complex statistical issue beyond the scope of this article; therefore, if you follow the revisions suggested below these confusions should be clarified.

Compulsory revisions:
1. The survival analyses in the article are standard and precisely presented. However, why do you state in the replies to both referees that the Wilcoxon test is used? The ordinary log-rank test (Mantel-Cox) is present in the SPSS software (in the Kaplan-Meier part of the survival analyses) and should hence be used, it should also be stated in the statistics section of the article.

2. In the conclusion of the abstract, rewrite the first sentence to: "... with no loss to follow-up for the patients, found revision rates that conform with the large Swedish THR registry"

3. In the second paragraph of the background section. In the second sentence erase the phrase: "with a high degree of certainty".

4. Rewrite the last sentence of the background to: "The primary purpose of this study was to compare the revision rate of Exeter THR's inserted at the FSA with that of other hospitals found in the literature, and furthermore to assess the complication rate by the use of a detailed complication register in a study cohort without loss to follow-up for the patients."

5. In the Methods section, rewrite the third sentence to: "... in Iceland or moved abroad, which none had, after the primary ...".

Competing interests:

None declared.