Reviewer's report

Title: Outcome analysis following removal of locking plate fixation of the proximal humerus

Version: 3 Date: 19 August 2008

Reviewer: Nirmal Tejwani

Reviewer's report:

This authors have presented series of patients who underwent hardware removal and state that their patients improved with this procedure. They had significant improvement in Constant scores after this procedure. Did the patients in the different groups improve the function that they underwent the procedure for?

Did the rotation deficit group improve their rotation? What were the before and after range of motion?

Did the impingement group improve the specific symptoms and motion?

This paper would be much improved if the authors can compare their group to one who did not have hardware removal.

In the conclusion, the authors state that routine hardware removal is not justified. However, this is the exact opposite of what they did in the group of patients who requested hardware removal (35% of all patients). Also, if their results were so good, with minimal complications, why would they not state that this can be done.

The conclusion should be changed to read that based on their results, they recommend removal of hardware in patients with symptoms.

Level of interest: An article of limited interest

Quality of written English: Acceptable

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