Reviewer’s report

Title: The association between C-reactive protein and the likelihood of progression to joint replacement in people with rheumatoid arthritis

Version: 1 Date: 14 August 2008

Reviewer: Joachim Kalden

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The manuscript is of interest for the treatment of RA in daily practice, that is that an early and aggressive use of DMARDs and recently of TNFalpha antagonists seems to be necessary to avoid total joint replacement in RA patients by consistently lowering the inflammatory activity. In this respect it would have been of interest to know if the percentage of patients who did not show a major decrease in CRP or presented major changes in the CRP over the observation period, ended up with a total joint replacement. In addition, it would be of interest if this group of patients were undergoing different therapeutic regimes as compared to RA patients not ending up with a joint replacement. I am not sure if this would be possible. At least this possibility should be included in the discussion.

Furthermore, since this manuscript is completely dependant on the use of optimal statistical methods, I would highly recommend to get this manuscript evaluated by a statistician.

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