Reviewer’s report

Title: Chronic Pancreatitis of the Pancreatic Remnant is an Independent Risk Factor for Pancreatic Fistula after Distal Pancreatectomy

Version: 2 Date: 25 June 2014

Reviewer: Thilo Hackert

Reviewer’s report:

Some revisions have been included in the manuscript. Still, the photographs, even though they might be nice, are not necessary.

In the discussion, the authors state that anastomosis on the pancreatic stump could be the safest closure technique. This is absolutely speculative and no valid study has ever proven this concept.

Furthermore, the results of the DISPACT trial are not discussed correctly. When the authors refer to their study regarding clinically relevant POPF, they should compare these results with DISPACT POPF B/C rates. In the DISPACT trial these were 20-21% in either group which is absolutely equivalent with the results from Dresden. The overall POPF rate of 44%, however is higher than the overall rate from DISPACT. This needs to be corrected in the discussion.

Therefore, the final conclusion that hand-sewn stump closure has improved POPF rate remains obscure as no other technique has been used in the entire series of patients and the POPF rate is acceptable, but not extraordinarily low.

Level of interest: An article of limited interest

Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being published

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

Declaration of competing interests:

no competing interests