Reviewer's report

Title: The impact of fellowship training on pathological outcomes following radical prostatectomy: a population based analysis

Version: 3  Date: 10 August 2014

Reviewer: Kamran Zargar Shoshtari

Reviewer's report:

1. Surgeons’ experience should also be accounted for in analyses in this setting, long experience in a procedure will have an impact on the outcome, 1-2 years of fellowship training can make up some gap but eliminate the value of experience. The referred article in the discussion does not compare the outcomes head to head between new and experienced surgeons.

2. The authors state that lower volume surgeons had improved rates for PSM. They discuss this very briefly in their paper. Given that the impact of fellowship training is being assessed here, and assuming that an academic fellowship trained urologist would have higher volume then this needs to be explored further, at least a breakdown of volume and training be shown.

3. The abstract states “the proportion of PSM between NFTA and NA urologists was not significant (p=0.815) “ I do not see these results in the main part of the manuscript.

4. Performing a nerve sparing procedure is an important factor that can affect rates of PSM. This has not been addressed at any stage in the article.

5. Are these all Open retropubic radical prostatectomies? Any Robotic, laparoscopic or perineal cases?

6. Why are the authors looking at 3 categories of surgeons? If the aim is urologic oncology fellowship and an oncologic parameter is being assessed there is no need to break the non-oncology trained group into further groups.

Minor Compulsory Revisions

Table 1 : values are in percentages, absolute numbers should be shown as it is important for interpretation of the results.

Table 1 Age, the values in the brackets are not interquartile ranges as stated in the footnote.

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.
Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests