Reviewer's report

Title: The burden of prolonged indwelling catheter after acute urinary retention in Ikeja - Lagos, Nigeria

Version: 1 Date: 9 February 2007

Reviewer: Pieter Johannes J van den Broek

Reviewer's report:

General
The authors ask attention for a serious healthcare problem in Nigeria. Patients have to wait a very long time before they are operated for acute urinary retention. In the mean time these patients have a urinary bladder catheter. The authors have surveyed the complications and costs that go together with long-term bladder catheterization. As can be expected both costs and complications are considerable.

Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)
1. The description of Materials and Methods is insufficient.
2. The authors say that they investigated 62 patients during a 3-week period. If they planned to do so, it is correct to give this information here. If they only planned to do the survey for 3 weeks the 62 patients should be mentioned as a result.
3. Was it planned to include all patients seen at the catheter clinic during the survey period?
4. Are patients scheduled to visit the catheter clinic at regular intervals or do they come when they have problems with the catheter?
5. Were there any exclusion criteria?
6. How were the costs estimated? Detailed information is necessary to assess the validity of the cost calculation.
7. How was the ‘perceived quality of life’ measured? Did the authors use a validated method to measure quality of life?
8. The Results section should give information about the total number of patients with a catheter for acute urinary retention visiting the catheter clinic during the survey period. To assess whether the 62 included patients are representative for the population of patients with a catheter for acute urinary tract infection, some information should be given about non-included patients, especially indications for catheterization and duration of catheterization are relevant.
9. The authors should mention when they did the survey, month and year. This is important to assess whether the results are still relevant.
10. Were all patients male? Trauma patients could be female.
11. In the investigated population removal of the catheter failed or was not tried. Important information is how successful in general TWOC is. Bias is possible because patients with successful TWOC, will not be represented.
12. Because it is unclear how the authors measured health-related quality of life, the correlations between quality of life and specific complications are hard to understand. The authors calculated correlation coefficients it seems. It would be more informative to give relative risks or odds ratios calculated by univariate and multivariate analysis.
13. What is the waiting time for surgery for acute urinary retention? This should be known from other sources than this survey. This information is important to assess whether the surveyed population is representative for patients with acute urinary retention in general.
Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)

1. The cost calculation regards only the costs that the patients have to pay themselves. It is suggested that a large part of the costs are paid by the state. It would be much more informative (and probably convincing for the government) to calculate the total costs to see not only the costs for the patient but also the costs for the state.

2. The Discussion better starts with telling what the results of the present study are.

3. Thorough correction of language is needed.

Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

**What next?:** Unable to decide on acceptance or rejection until the authors have responded to the major compulsory revisions

**Level of interest:** An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

**Quality of written English:** Not suitable for publication unless extensively edited

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

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests