Reviewer’s report

Title: Is annual surveillance of all treated hypothyroid patients necessary?

Version: 1 Date: 11 December 2006

Reviewer: John Henry H Lazarus

Reviewer’s report:

General
This paper analyses a large number of patients with a 10 or more year follow-up on thyroxine therapy for hypothyroidism and concludes 18 monthly surveillance is adequate for those patients less than 60 years of age on a stable thyroxine dose of between 100 and 150 mcgs per day. The authors found more abnormal thyroid testing in the 12 monthly group compared to the 18 month. They explain this on the increased frequency of testing, but it seems surprising because presumably more time would elapse in the 18 month group between tests to actually produce an abnormal test. Have the authors any explanation for this finding?

When an abnormal result was detected, did this mean that all patients were required for follow-up or were some of the abnormal results of such a minor nature that an out-patient visit was not required?
Do the authors have any data on the death rates in the two groups?
These are minor points. I think the paper is a useful addition to the clinical care of thyroid patients on long term follow-up. Perhaps the authors could identify the total cost of the Grampian Follow-up Register and express the potential savings as a percentage.

Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)

Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)

Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

What next?: Accept after minor essential revisions

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No

Declaration of competing interests:
I confirm that I have no competing interests in relation to the paper reviewed