Reviewer’s report

Title: Fetal cardiac muscle contractility decrease with gestational age: a color-coded tissue velocity imaging study

Version: 1 Date: 10 April 2012

Reviewer: Patricia Iozzo

Reviewer’s report:

The authors examined the hearts of 55 apparently healthy fetuses between 18 and 42 weeks of gestation using tissue velocity imaging and 2D anatomical information. They observed that cardiac contractility decreases with gestational age.

This is an interesting report describing normal cardiac function and its changes during gestation.

Minor Essential Revisions:

1) What were the inclusion and exclusion criteria?
2) Can the authors provide information on maternal age and any available maternal data of potential relevance, e.g. was there any diabetes, obesity, gestational complication, hypertension? This would be very interesting
3) Please stratify data according to gender.
4) Could the authors test if there were any correlations with birth weight?
5) The discussion is a bit repetitive and can be shortened.
6) Please revise the English language.

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

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:

I declare that I have no competing interests