Reviewer's report

Title: Utility of Carotid Duplex Ultrasonography in a general inner-city hospital

Version: 3 Date: 28 October 2014

Reviewer: Rosa Maria Bruno

Reviewer's report:

Major compulsory revisions

The study is a description of clinical characteristics associated to extracranial cerebrovascular disease in patients from the Newark Beth Israel Medical Center. The authors found that 88 out of 827 (10.6%) patients had significant carotid or vertebro-basilar stenosis. Characteristics associated to this conditions were age >65 years, presence of carotid bruit and prior CEA.

1) The type of patients recruited by the center is not specified in the article (only partly in the cover letter). The findings should be discussed considering the selection bias.

2) Indication for the exams performed is not mentioned. Since the authors consider appropriateness issues in the discussion section, it would be appropriate to calculate how many exams were inappropriate according to current guidelines and calculate the prevalence of extracranial cerebrovascular disease in patient with an appropriate indication or not. This could represent an element of novelty that by now is lacking.

3) Characteristics associated to extracranial cerebrovascular disease were age >65 years, presence of carotid bruit and prior CEA. These results should be commented in the discussion section: were they surprising according to current literature?

4) Which is the take-home message of this paper? would you recommend to perform carotid ultrasound only in patients with age >65 years, presence of carotid bruit and prior CEA in a population comparable with yours? how many false negative cases there are by using only the abovementioned clinical characteristics in the study population?

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:

I declare that I have no competing interests