Reviewer’s report

Title: Assessing functional mitral regurgitation with exercise echocardiography: rationale and clinical applications

Version: 3 Date: 2 November 2009

Reviewer: Quirino Ciampi

Reviewer’s report:

The authors assessed the rationale and clinical applications exercise echocardiography in functional mitral regurgitation.

The paper is very interesting and well written.

The authors have consolidated experience in this subject.

There are some suggestions:

1. The authors used different size of font.

2. In the clinical relevance of exercise-induced changes in functional mitral regurgitation section, the authors should analyze the relationship between myocardial contractile reserve and mitral regurgitation in patients with dilated cardiomyopathy.

3. Lebron et al (reference #12) demonstrated that the PISA method can be performed during semi-supine exercise in a high proportion of patients with heart failure and functional MR, if the flow-convergence region is appropriate it is the most reproducible, although it is more technically demanding, especially during exercise, hence the Doppler method can be an alternative in patients with a suboptimal flow-convergence definition. The authors should indicate which is the best method to assess functional mitral regurgitation during exercise.

Level of interest: An article of outstanding merit and interest in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests