Reviewer's report

Title: Ruling out coronary heart disease in primary care patients with chest pain: a clinical prediction score

Version: 1 Date: 5 November 2009

Reviewer: Lehana Thabane

Reviewer's report:

This is a multicentre cohort study of consecutive patients presenting with chest pain at 59 family practitioners' offices in Switzerland. The primary aim of the study was to develop a prediction rule for identify coronary heart disease in primary care.

This is a statistical review of the report focusing primarily on the design, methods, analysis, reporting and interpretation of the results.

Overall, this reviewer could not find any flaws with the design and analysis of the study.

Below are some minor comments

1. Abstract: Methods:
   a. State the statistical methods used to analyze the data including the criterion for statistical significance.

2. Abstract: Results:
   a. Define the acronyms ROC and CI.
   b. Replace upper case “N” with lower case “n”. The former is usually used to denote a population size, while the latter is for sample size.

3. Statistical analysis:
   a. Provide some description of how the sample size was determined to ensure the stability of the models.
   b. On page 8, provide some reference for bootstrapping techniques – some readers may not be familiar with them.

4. Figures
   a. Consider deleting Figure 2

Which journal?: Appropriate or potentially appropriate for BMC Medicine: an article of importance in its field

What next?: Accept for publication in BMC Medicine after minor essential revisions
Quality of written English: Acceptable

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’