Reviewer's report

Title: Metformin Treatment in Diabetes and Heart Failure: When Academic Equipoise Meets Clinical Reality?

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Reviewer: Richard Pratley

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Eurich et al provide information on a pilot trial undertaken to evaluate the potential use of metformin in patients with type 2 diabetes and heart failure. Unfortunately it did not prove feasible to recruit patients into the trial, despite rather liberal inclusion criteria. The main insight from this experience is that a substantial number of persons with heart failure and T2DM are already treated with metformin (despite the relative contraindication). Thus, clinical practice has preempted the collection of rigorous prospective randomized clinical trial data.

This is an extremely important area of research, given the high and growing proportion of patients with T2DM and heart failure and the paucity of prospective data in the area. The authors are to be congratulated for tackling this difficult area and moreover for their insightful analysis of their failed pilot project. The project was well conceived and designed and their experience clearly presented. Too often, the difficulties in conducting such studies are underappreciated. Eurich's experience will hopefully prevent others from repeating this and also might suggest alternate approaches to address the knowledge gap.

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

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 I have no competing interests.