Reviewer’s report

Title: Perioperative management in distal pancreatectomy: Results of a survey in 23 European centres and a review of literature.

Version: 2 Date: 12 December 2008

Reviewer: Fiona Simpson

Reviewer’s report:

Thank-you for sending this paper to me to review.

Minor Essential Revisions

Methods Section:
1. Methods section, first word: Please amend the word survey (bolded) to read ‘Survey of current practice’ in your manuscript. This should also be changed in the results section, first word of the manuscript.

2. Was ethics approval required to conduct this study? Please address this in your manuscript.

3. Please provide a section in the methods of your manuscript describing the standardized questionnaire. This includes addressing who developed the survey, whether pilot testing was undertaken, who administered the survey, what mode was used to administer the survey, which profession/s were surveyed in each of the 23 institutions, the number of people surveyed in each of the 23 institutions and how was the survey returned.

4. Please include a copy of the survey instrument in the appendix of the manuscript.

5. In your manuscript please provide more of a description of the DISPACT trial, including basic demographic details of the 23 centres taking part in the (DISPACT) trial. For example are the facilities adult or pediatric, what is the size of each of the facilities, is the trial focusing on ward or intensive care recruitment.

Is there a trial registry number for the DISPACT trial – if so please provide it in the manuscript. If there is a trial protocol paper already published please reference it so readers can read more about the trial if desired.

6. Methods section, second paragraph: Please amend the word literature (bolded) to read ‘Literature search of best practice’ in your manuscript. This should also be changed in the results section of your manuscript.

7. The literature search was performed independently by three authors. Please describe in your manuscript who manually cross-searched additional publications and screened titles/abstracts/full text articles.
8. In your manuscript, please provide the terms used to filter the search for study design (and add to table as per point 2 in discretionary revisions).

9. In your manuscript, please describe whether you limited your search by language, what your search dates were, and whether you searched any other electronic databases other than Medline.

Results section:
10. Please remove the second and third sentences in the survey section. I think these are relevant to the literature search section.

11. Please change the word antiobiosis to antibiotics in all instances throughout the manuscript.

12. Literature search section: Throughout your manuscript, please put the reference numbers immediately after referring to the authors or studies.

For example, in the 'literature search bowel preparation paragraph': please provide the references of the two meta-analysis directly after reference to them so the reader does not have to look through the seven references listed at the end of the first sentence to work out which two are relevant.

13. Literature search section, bowel preparation: In your manuscript, please support your statement that the two meta-analyses found beneficial effects of no bowel preparation by explicitly providing the p-values of each outcome from each individual meta-analysis. Additionally, for the two of six RCTs included in one of the meta-analyses please specify which meta-analysis you are referring to, and provide the effect sizes and p-values of each individual RCT so the reader can read the individual supportive RCTs if desired.

14. Literature search section, feeding regimens: Please describe in the manuscript what you mean by 'early' and 'late' postoperative return to oral diet.

Discretionary Revisions
1. Please spell out in full ‘ICU’ and ‘IMC’ acronyms in the method section before shortening them throughout the manuscript.

2. Please consider putting the Medline search terms in a separate table and removing them from the body of the text.

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 i have no competing interests.