Reviewer’s report

Title: Early postoperative cognitive dysfunction and postoperative delirium after anaesthesia with various hypnotics: a double blind, prospective, randomized, controlled clinical trial - The PINOCCHIO trial -

Version: 5 Date: 30 December 2010

Reviewer: Charlie Goldsmith

Reviewer’s report:

The comments to the issues raised by the Deputy Editor have been adequately handled. However, the revised text now contains a few other issues that it would be good to deal with prior to publication.

1. P(age) 11, p(aragraph) 2, l(ine) 8. Replace [stratified] by [blocked]. The comments provided make it clear that the study is NOT stratified; but blocked.
2. P 13, p 1, l 2. Replace [ranging] by [varying].
3. P 15, p 1, last 2 lines. The Aldrete score software should be referenced.
4. P 16, p 1, l 4,5. It is now clear that the authors are testing 2 correlated hypotheses. It would be best to compute their statistical significance with a variant of Dunnett’s test because of the correlation. Also, it would have been best to use a 2:2:3 allocation ratio and so block sizes as a multiple of 7 to handle the correlation. However, since the study has recruited many patients it does not make sense to change the blocking factor in the middle of the trial.
5. P 16, p 1, l 9, 10, 11, 13. The text on the sample size uses the term [proportion] or [proportions] while the numbers used are percentages. This should be made consistent.
6. P 16, p 1, l 15. The Farrington and Manning reference is NOT contained in the reference list. Please add it.
8. P 16, p 2, l 1,2. There is no need to specify the block size in this publication. It runs the risk that clinicians who make decisions to put patients into the trial will be encouraged to anticipate the next allocation with the knowledge of the last few allocations and so break the concealment of the randomization list. It is soon enough to inform clinicians at the time of the publication as to what the block size indeed was. The sentence needs to state it was blocked, but not specify the block sizes.
10. P 23, Symptoms 2,3 on line 1. Since [or] includes [and] logically, there is no need to use [and/].