Reviewer's report

Title: Assessment of data quality in an international multi-centre randomised trial of coronary artery surgery

Version: 2 Date: 20 July 2011

Reviewer: Jane Nixon

Reviewer's report:

This is a well written article. The area is niche - the logistics and management of international trials involving developing countries.

I am not sure about the following which by the definition above are 'major':

1. The definition in the text for the timelines measured seems clear, but is then confused by Table 2 which includes 'data entered onto database' in the timeline. It needs to be clarified that the timelines compared are to 'data received'.

2. Table 3 - it is not clear why table 3 is included - ie full details of the baseline characteristics. What is relevant is the ethnicity data and this raises some key questions (see point 2 below)

3. Recruitment by country and by centre is not reported and this would seem critical to researchers planning a future trial. Were all the centres included for the full duration of the recruitment period? What was the range in number of months recruiting?

There were two outliers - one centre in both groups - what was important about these centres? How did they impact overall on the conclusions you made in terms of comparing recruitment rates and data quality?

It would seem from the ethnicity data that recruitment by country was circa 600 in Poland, 80 in India. 82 patients are classified as 'other' - I presume these are Brazilian - this needs clarifying.

I am not sure about the justification of developing and developed, where 'developing' includes European, Asian and South American countries. If 75% of patients in the 'developing' countries were recruited from Poland, how generalisable is this to Asian and South American centres?

Given the

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

Quality of written English: Acceptable
**Statistical review:** Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I have co-authored two papers with Marcus Flather.