Reviewer's report

Title: Hydroxymethylglutaryl-CoA reductase inhibition with simvastatin in Acute lung injury to Reduce Pulmonary dysfunction (HARP-2) trial protocol: A randomised, double-blind, placebo controlled trial of simvastatin in acute lung injury.

Version: 2 Date: 12 July 2012

Reviewer: Carolyn Calfee

Reviewer's report:

This is a well-written, clear and concise description of a thoughtfully designed clinical trial to test the hypothesis that treatment with statins will improve clinical outcomes for patients with acute lung injury. The research group is internationally recognized for their excellent clinical and translational studies in the field. The trial has been thoughtfully designed to test a hypothesis supported by compelling pre-clinical and early clinical data, and the manuscript is appropriately detailed with a clear plan for statistical analysis included. I have only 2 minor discretionary suggestions:

1. The authors may wish to consider adding a reference to the ongoing Phase III trial of rosuvastatin for infection-related lung injury being conducted in the US by the NHLBI’s ARDS network.

2. How frequently will safety labs be monitored? I presume they will be checked at each of the blood draws referenced on the bottom of page 7, but clarification may be helpful.

Level of interest: An article of importance 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 have served on advisory boards for Glaxo Smith Kline, Ikaria and Cerus Corporation within the past 5 years.