Reviewer's report

Title: Does regional compared to local Anaesthesia influence outcome after arteriovenous fistula creation?

Version: 1 Date: 20 February 2013

Reviewer: Davinia Withington

Reviewer's report:

This is a well planned study with a clear rationale and hypothesis and carefully described background and methodology. It has a strong chance of answering the research question. The team has considerable expertise in the clinical techniques to be employed and demonstrates a sound understanding of trial planning.

Major revisions:

It would be wise to have an independent Data Management and Safety Committee (DMSC) to oversee study progress and in particular to adjudicate possible severe adverse reactions. The DMSC can provide expertise without involving the study investigators and may ask for unblinding of groups where necessary without any impact on final analysis.

Training of the observers performing ultrasound vessel size assessments is not described. It is unclear if these was anesthesiologists or ultrasonographers or radiologists. In whichever case inter- and intra-observer variability for these important measurements needs to be discussed. It is unlikely that one observer was performing all measures so inter-observer variability is a significant factor for final data interpretation.

Minor revisions

Some aspects of phraseology need addressing.

In describing the study 1:1 allocation should be stated also the size of blocks should be given.

Excess detail of the actual randomisation process is provided.

Patients and enrolment: final paragraph of this section is duplicating much of what is stated in the next section and could be omitted.

Description of BPB: add mg/kg for L-bupivacaine dose.

Is there a particular rationale for use of L-bupivacaine vs bupivacaine vs ropivacaine?

The usage "the anaesthetic doctor" is weird. Why not the anesthetist or the
anaesthesiologist?

Discussion: not required as such. The risk-benefit section could be in the previous section discussing adverse event reporting.

**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:**

No competing interests financial or non-financial