Reviewer's report

Title: Social Acceptability of Treatments for Adolescent Idiopathic Scoliosis: a cross-sectional study.

Version: 1 Date: 15 May 2006

Reviewer: Theodoros B. Grivas

Reviewer's report:

General

Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)

The social acceptability on currently available forms of treatment for Adolescent Idiopathic scoliosis is a very interesting issue and any study addressing this question will give more insight to this complicated chapter. The children’s compliance to conservative (brace or exercises) treatment is of major significance and the outcome of the treatment depends on, mainly, the children’s attitude on this issue and in some degree is related also to social acceptability. Thus, in a similar study it is essential to have the response of the affected children and not only of their parents. How the lack of this input could affect the results of the study is a matter for discussion.

The answers of scoliotic and of non-scoliotic children parents would probably be different. Therefore I thing that the design of the study is weak in this point and needs analysis and discussion. The title therefore could possibly be altered in order to indicate the parents of non-scoliotic children acceptability of treatments for adolescent idiopathic scoliosis or something similar.

The response rate in the study group of less than 40% seems not reasonable especially in a solicited group of people to answer for a research study. As a consequence this is also a reflection of the comprehensibility of the study.

Why the authors used the scale of 25% and 60% risk of progression? This needs some discussion.

The rating scale "easy, complex and difficult" is confusing and needs to be defined.

Is the "Chi-square test appropriate for measuring the repeatability?"

How many researchers took place for the data acquisition for the number (3162 families) of the examined population? If there are more than the two authors this needs mentioning at least in the acknowledgment section.

Since the issue of the social acceptability of treatments for AIS is very important, I thing that this article finally could see the lights of publication but only after major compulsory revisions.

Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)

Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

What next?: Unable to decide on acceptance or rejection until the authors have responded to the major compulsory revisions

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.