Reviewer's report

Title: A Dutch Guideline for the Treatment of Scoliosis in Neuromuscular Disorders

Version: 2 Date: 29 July 2008

Reviewer: Richard McCall

Reviewer's report:

RE: A Dutch Guideline for the Treatment of Scoliosis in Neuromuscular Disorders

This article is essentially a meta-analysis of the literature concerning treatment of neuromuscular scoliosis, predominantly scoliosis secondary to Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy and Spinal Muscular Atrophy. The article is well reasoned and well balanced, as the authors reached their conclusions by analysis of the literature rather than any independent or bias studies. The standard of writing is also very acceptable.

The only real problem with a meta-analysis is that it does not break any new ground. It is essentially a compilation of existing articles and draws conclusions based on the conclusions of previous authors. This article is important because it is a thorough review of the literature concerning medical and surgical treatment of muscular dystrophy and spinal muscular atrophy. However it is very limited in scope and does not really add any new conclusions to the existing body of literature on these two subjects. I feel this article would be of interest to physicians who are heavily involved in treating patients in these two areas or possibly as a review article for residents in training, but as it covers a very limited area and, as a result has only limited interest to the majority of spinal surgeons.

Comments

1. There are really no compulsory revisions involved in this article with the exception of some minor spelling mistakes.
2. As there are no major revisions necessary, I feel this article could be accepted without revision. I feel the article is sound as it is based on multiple authors published works and does not offer any conclusions independent of utilizing the existing literature.
3. Level of interest
   a. This is an article whose findings would be important only to those with closely related research interests and as such would have only limited interest for the average spinal surgeon. It would probably be best published as a review type article as it does not really break any new ground, only synthesizing previous investigators work.
4. Quality of written English
   a. I feel that this article is acceptable in its present format in so far as the quality
of English and organization.

In summary I feel this article would be publishable only as a review article and is an article of very limited interest as it is a meta-analysis of a narrow area of treatment of scoliotic neuromuscular disorders only. There is review of the literature for treatment as to bracing conservative treatment, surgery and also related fields such as anesthesia.

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

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

**Statistical review:** No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.