Reviewer's report

Title: Treatment of Thoracolumbar and Lumbar Curves with P.A.S.B. Brace for Idiopathic Scoliosis: assessment of results following the S.R.S. Commitee on Bracing and Nonoperative Management Standardization Criteria.

Version: 1 Date: 16 June 2009

Reviewer: Charles R d'Amato

Reviewer's report:

Major Compulsory Revisions:

1. Although, the authors have significant experience with the conservative management of spinal deformity their paper suffers from lack of a control group, similar to the vast majority of papers on bracing. If comparison is made to the expectations from the few available natural history studies, this should be clearly articulated. Their excellent results comparing Cobb and Perdriolle at the beginning and end of treatment do not address the problem of lacking controls and this should be discussed.

2. The study seems to be confined to females. Perhaps this should be reflected in the title, since brace treatment of scoliosis in males is more challenging and more often ineffective.

3. The authors should discuss the fact that lumbar and thoraco lumbar curves are less likely to progress than thoracic curves. Again, if comparison is made to the natural history data available, this should be discussed as it pertains to lumbar and thoraco lumbar curves. Curve pattern is part of the SRS standardization criteria.

4. No compliance data is provided. It would be useful to know whether or not both compliant and non compliant patients did equally well. This is also recommended by the SRS standardization criteria.

5. A thorough description of the casting and bracing technique should be included in the paper such as that published on the P.A.S.G. in Research into Spinal Deformities 2,I.A.F. Stokes (Ed.)1999.

Minor/Discretionary Revisions:

1. The paper needs further editing for clarity of writing and language usage.

2. The concept of the P.A.S.G is very interesting. Have the authors tried this technique with thoracic curves or early onset scoliosis?

Level of interest: An article of outstanding merit and interest in its field
Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being published

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

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests.