Reviewer's report

Title: Causes, pattern and short-term outcome of chest injuries at Bugando Medical Centre, Mwanza, Tanzania

Version: 2 Date: 20 August 2010

Reviewer: Mustafa B INAN

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Comments to the authors
A-General Comments

I read with great interest the manuscript entitled "Causes, pattern and short-term outcome of chest injuries at Bugando Medical Centre, Mwanza, Tanzania". The aim of this study was to outline the etiological spectrum, injury patterns and short term outcome of these injuries in their setting. This was a descriptive cross-sectional study. A total of 150 chest injury patients were studied. At the end of the study, they concluded that the majority of chest injuries in their setting is due to traffic accidents and can be managed conservatively and by simple chest drainage tubes which can be readily performed even in rural hospitals. The authors put forward that this study is important to save the lives of patients presenting with chest injuries seen in Tanzania. Any study on this issue is thus of interest, if it has a well defined objective and if it is based on a sound methodology. However, I am not convinced that the hypothesis and discussion of this study are very clear. Moreover, there are structural and grammatical errors in all of the text. Please, it should be read by someone who is fluent in English.

Please also take into consideration the following remarks:

B-More specific comments

About the "Title"
1- I believe, it may be shortened

About the "Abstract" section
1- Hypotheses with predictor valuable and outcome valuable should be clearly declared.

2- Methods should be re-written as short as possible.

3- Conclusion should be re-written more clear and satisfactory. The message should be decelerated with commatic and hypotheses oriented sentences.

About the "Background" section
1- The Background section of the article is devoted too extensive review on well-known epidemiological and clinical aspects of thoracic trauma. However, the authors should declare in this section that why they performed this study? Which
dynamics? The authors should focus their own conditions in the light of the literature that they were encouraged by those to write this manuscript.

2- I think there is no clear hypothesis in this manuscript. Hypotheses with outcome valuable and predictor valuable may be decelerated at the and of the introduction section

About the "Methods" section
A good rule of thumb is that the typically trained reader, after reading the "Method" section, could replicate the procedures and obtain essentially the same results. I doubt that this would be possible with the present manuscript. There are a number of issues:

1- The authors should give short information about Bugando Medical Centre with the aim of the study in the Background section of the manuscript, instead of “Patients and Method”. In my opinion, in the “Patients and Method” section this kind of information is not given, it may not be suitable.

2- Are there exclusion and/or inclusion criteria in this study? Which one?

3- What were the indications of conservative and/or surgical treatment (tube thoracostomy, VATS or open chest surgery)

About the "Results" section
1- The authors should prefer “p” instead of “p-value” in the whole of the text.

2- Data is giving with confusing style in this section. I recommend that what they want to discuss in “Discussion” section they should give related data in the “Results” section. Most of things were given and it is very difficult to identify important data for the readers. So, at this point, hypothesis may be a perfect guide to determine important data for “Discussion” section

About the "Discussion" section
1- The Discussion section of the manuscript unfortunately is reiteration of what is known and has been described so often already. What is your special contribution in the literature?

2- Please discuss only your data. Readers can find anywhere literature knowledge; actually they wonder your specific ideas with your specific data.

3- Please declare your study’s limitations before the conclusion paragraph

4- Your message should be clear, original, short and effective. It also should be decelerated with commatic and hypotheses oriented sentences.

About the "References" section
1- Writing style should revise of the references according to the "Author's Guideline" of the journal.

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:
I declare that I have no competing interests.