Reviewer's report

Title: A rigid barrier between the heart and sternum protects the heart and lungs against rupture during negative pressure wound therapy

Version: 1 Date: 21 April 2011

Reviewer: Arnt E. Fiane

Reviewer's report:

Minor essential revisions: I would like some comments about the limitations of the study. Is the model valid? Is it enough to just inspect the surface and measure the dimensions of epicardial bleeding/ petecchia to conclude? The hearts which ruptured - did they also have most surface injuries? What about rupture and minor surface injuries?

In a clinical situation; with infected sternum over days, weeks - is this a different situation than heathy pigs observed over hours?

Otherwise a well written manuscript.

Simple study with a clear hypothesis.

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.

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests