Reviewer's report

Title: Atrial fibrillation after pulmonary lobectomy for lung cancer affects long-term survival in a prospective single-center study

Version: 1 Date: 28 November 2011

Reviewer: Ralph Aye

Reviewer's report:

No revisions recommended

I have thoroughly reviewed the article, the tables, and the supporting material. This is a very well-written and conceived study, with a clearly-stated goal at the outset, clear and detailed descriptions of the materials and methods, a fairly exhaustive inclusion of pertinent variables, and detailed statistical analysis. In addition, as a single-center experience with a consistent standard of practice within a regional health system, it controls for variations in practice patterns, demographics and data collection. As such it represents one of the best illustrations in the literature of the clinical impact of atrial fibrillation following lung resection, and the variables associated with it, and will be a valuable reference on that basis alone.

The authors identify an association between atrial fibrillation and long-term survival. This conclusion appears well-supported by their methods. While they offer possible explanations regarding the reason for this association, they are careful not to go beyond the data in attempting to link causality. It would be interesting to know the causes of mortality in the 151 patients with 5 year follow-up, and to have more information about an association with treatment for atrial fibrillation, e.g. use of amiodarone, cardiac events etc. but the authors are clear that there was insufficient or unreliable data for this analysis.

Level of interest: An article of outstanding merit and interest in its field

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