Reviewer's report

Title: Rupture of Heterologous Pericardial Patch after Aortic Annulus Enlargement

Version: 4 Date: 11 April 2014

Reviewer: Keith Buchan

Reviewer's report:

This case report describes a case where a Nicks procedure had been carried out to enlarge the aortic annulus at the time of implantation of a mechanical aortic valve prosthesis for aortic stenosis. 9 years previously an ascending aortic replacement had been carried out for Type A aortic dissection. The narrative then switches to the description of a false aneurysm appearing in relation to the equine pericardial patch used for the Nicks procedure. The interval between aortic valve replacement and detection of the false aneurysm should be stated. The text states that the equine patch was removed and replaced with a composite Dacron/bovine pericardial patch. Since the original mechanical valve was not explanted, this indicates that the original operation involved enlarging the aortic root, not the aortic annulus. The title should be amended to reflect this difference. It is not common practice to use equine pericardium for aortic reconstruction. Bovine pericardium is thicker. A statement such as “we no longer use equine pericardium in reconstructing the aortic root” would be appropriate.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests