Reviewer’s report

Title: Superior vena cava syndrome in a dialysis patient: a case report.

Version: 1 Date: 26 February 2012

Reviewer: Dirk Hentschel

Which of the following following best describes what type of case report this is?: None

Has the case been reported coherently?: Yes

Is the case report authentic?: Yes

Is the case report ethical?: Yes

Is there any missing information that you think must be added before publication?: Yes

Is this case worth reporting?: Yes

Is the case report persuasive?: No

Does the case report have explanatory value?: Yes

Does the case report have diagnostic value?: No

Will the case report make a difference to clinical practice?: No

Is the anonymity of the patient protected?: Yes

Comments to authors:

The authors report a case of right-sided arm and head swelling in association with a history of multiple tunneled hemodialysis catheters and now a new high flow access.

This is a typical presentation of a common complication of tunneled catheters.

The images are mis-interpreted: NOT the superior vena cava, but the right brachiocephalic vein is stenoses. With superior vena cava stenosis one typically find BILATERAL arm swelling.

While the authors appropriate quote from the KDOQI guidelines they do not provide a reason why the stent was used...was there recoil of the brachiocephalic vein stenosis?
While the case is not unusual in its presentation the images are very nice. I would want to see correction of several typographical and nomenclature errors, as well as correction of the title (this is not a superior vena cava syndrome), the text and the legends regarding the brachiocephalic versus the SVC.

To make this case stand out and add to the existing body of literature I would like to see a discussion of the management of high flow to reduce the swelling. This is in particular helpful as central vein stenoses typically recur through the interstices of uncovered stents. Banding to reduce flow could provide long-term resolution as over the sufficient venous collaterals develop.

Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being published

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests.