Reviewer’s report


Version: Date: 16 June 2014

Reviewer: Giuseppe Biondi-Zoccai

Reviewer’s report:

Kayibanda et al report an interesting protocol for a systematic review on intravenous (IV) contrast administration. Despite the work strengths, we recommend addressing the following comments:

1. Title (and throughout): Explicitly state that you want to focus only on contrast administration for CT scans. Also explicitly state that you will pool only observational studies.

2. Methods: You state that you only want to focus on studies comparing IV contrast vs non contrast tests, but it would be interesting to compare also IV vs IA (intra-arterial) contrast administration. For instance: IV contrast for CT renal angiography vs IA contrast for renal arteriography. Please comment and/or revise.

3. Methods: Excluding a priori randomized trials is unwise and ties your hands too early. Please revise.

4. Methods: Univariate meta-regression is in my opinion a misnomer, as any meta-regression by definition already incorporates at least one dependent variable (study effect) and two independent variables (a proxy of study precision and the moderator of interest). Please revise.

5. Discussion: Nice but too short, boost it to justify the publication of the protocol. Specifically, discuss in greater detail recent meta-analyses on your topic:
   Dong et al, J Nephrol 2012;25:290-301
   Biondi-Zoccai et al, Int J Cardiol 2014;172:375-80

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.

Declaration of competing interests:
I have worked on similar topics.