Reviewer's report

Title: Risk scores for predicting dysphagia in critically ill patients after cardiac surgery

Version: 0 Date: 05 Sep 2018

Reviewer: Eun-Ho Lee

Reviewer's report:

Thank you for the opportunity to review this article. In this prospective cohort study of 303 patients at cardiac care unit after cardiac surgery, the authors developed and validated a scoring model for risk stratification of dysphagia.

Although the paper contains an interesting and important topic, there are a number of problems with this study that need to be addressed.

1. The name of the institution/local ethics board that gave approval is not stated.

2. The primary outcome (i.e. dysphagia) needs to be described more clearly (when / how was dysphagia diagnosed?).

3. There is no sample size calculation provided and no power calculation. This is vital to the interpretation of the analysis. How did the authors calculate their sample size? Please clarify.

4. Did the authors check for the distribution of all continuous variables? Non-normally distributed variables should be presented as median and interquartile range.

5. Authors need to describe the construction of multivariable logistic regression model more detailed, since it may be important to really convince the reader.

6. Page 5, line 42: "congestive, heart failure" (remove ",")

7. Page 8, line 1: "multivariate logistic regression and to calculate hazard ratios (HRs) for relative risk of dysphagia" (Is "hazard ratios" right?)
8. Page 8, line 45: "Mean left ventricle ejection fraction (LVEF) at admission" (Is "at admission" meaning 'preoperative' or 'CCU'? Please clarify)

9. It is unclear what "gastric intubation" means. Please clarify.

**Are the methods appropriate and well described?**
If not, please specify what is required in your comments to the authors.

No

**Does the work include the necessary controls?**
If not, please specify which controls are required in your comments to the authors.

Unable to assess

**Are the conclusions drawn adequately supported by the data shown?**
If not, please explain in your comments to the authors.

Yes

**Are you able to assess any statistics in the manuscript or would you recommend an additional statistical review?**
If an additional statistical review is recommended, please specify what aspects require further assessment in your comments to the editors.

I recommend additional statistical review

**Quality of written English**
Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

Needs some language corrections before being published
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