Reviewer’s report

Title: Influence of early elective tracheostomy on the incidence of postoperative complications in patients undergoing head and neck surgery

Version: 1 Date: 08 Oct 2018

Reviewer: Zainab Ahmad

Reviewer's report:

Review is as follows:-
Major flaws:-

The authors have not mentioned if the study was prospective or retrospective.

It seems from line 48 of page 4 that study is retrospective.

However subsequently from lines 30 to 40 it appears that study is prospective.

Design of the study is not clear. Authors should be crystal clear what is the design of the study.

In methodology the authors have mentioned that data will be extracted for medical history, tumor grade and stage , ASA class, substance abuse etc. They have however failed to produce this in the results

The authors have not defined primary outcome and have not mentioned any sample size analysis which was undertaken to find out power of the study and whether the study was adequately powered to find out the results and conclusions

Authors have mentioned in the data analysis that they will be doing chi square test and Fischer exact test for statistical analysis.

However in the results any sort of statistical analysis has not been presented. All the results have been expressed in percentages only which do not add any value to the data presented.

Another major flaw is that the authors have not commented on the distribution of the groups. The authors have even failed to mention clearly how many patients were there in each group.

Also nasotracheal intubation in itself is a confounding factor for postoperative complications because of its association with bacteremia and infective complications in the ICU. Therefore it is erroneous to conclude that early primary tracheostomy has numerous benefits in this setting.
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.

No

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

No

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 am able to assess the statistics

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

Needs some language corrections before being published

Declaration of competing interests
Please complete a declaration of competing interests, considering the following questions:

1. Have you in the past five years received reimbursements, fees, funding, or salary from an organisation that may in any way gain or lose financially from the publication of this manuscript, either now or in the future?

2. Do you hold any stocks or shares in an organisation that may in any way gain or lose financially from the publication of this manuscript, either now or in the future?

3. Do you hold or are you currently applying for any patents relating to the content of the manuscript?

4. Have you received reimbursements, fees, funding, or salary from an organization that holds or has applied for patents relating to the content of the manuscript?

5. Do you have any other financial competing interests?
6. Do you have any non-financial competing interests in relation to this paper?

If you can answer no to all of the above, write 'I declare that I have no competing interests' below. If your reply is yes to any, please give details below.

I declare that I have no competing interests

I agree to the open peer review policy of the journal. I understand that my name will be included on my report to the authors and, if the manuscript is accepted for publication, my named report including any attachments I upload will be posted on the website along with the authors' responses. I agree for my report to be made available under an Open Access Creative Commons CC-BY license ([http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/](http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/)). I understand that any comments which I do not wish to be included in my named report can be included as confidential comments to the editors, which will not be published.

I agree to the open peer review policy of the journal