Reviewer's report

Title: Early initiation of renal replacement therapy in critically ill patients: a meta-analysis of randomized clinical trials

Version: 0 Date: 11 Feb 2019

Reviewer: Fabian Dusse

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Pasin and colleagues performed a meta-analysis including 10 RCTs with the aim to estimate the benefit of early RRT initiation.

major comments:

1. The heterogeneity among the included studies in the definition of "early" vs. "late /standard" makes it difficult to compare the respective results. Patients who are assigned to the "late group" in the one study (<12h) may be assigned to the "early group" in another study (<48h).

2. The "Standard indication" for RRT is not defined.

3. Several meta-analysis have been published in the recent years that address the same question. Although the studies included differ, the results and conclusions are comparable. It is not clearly stated, what the new findings of the current study are.

4. No legends are provided for the figures. This makes it difficult to put them into the context, especially for fig. 2+3.

minor comments

some typing errors, e.g.

p9 L47 "me"

p10 L10 "and ICU"
Are the methods appropriate and well described?
If not, please specify what is required in your comments to the authors.

Yes

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

Yes

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:

Acceptable

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