Reviewer’s report

**Title:** Critical Appraisal of International Guidelines for the Screening and Treatment of Asymptomatic Peripheral Artery Disease: A Systematic Review

**Version:** 0  **Date:** 07 Oct 2018

**Reviewer:** Vikram Iyer

**Reviewer’s report:**

Congratulations on addressing a very interesting topic in this paper. There is a clear need for greater correlation and consensus among international guidelines for the investigation and management of asymptomatic PAD and this review illustrates this very well. However, there are a few issues with the review which will need to be addressed prior to making it fit for publication:

- Review of the manuscript by someone with native or near-native English fluency (particularly in scientific writing) is strongly recommended as there are innumerable grammatical and syntactical errors which make the manuscript difficult to comprehend at times. This is an essential recommendation.

- The creation of the data extraction template needs to be discussed in more detail. No references to previously published data extraction tools are listed in the methodology section. Did the authors create a new template themselves or is this an adapted version of a pre-existing, validated template?

- With respect to screening for asymptomatic PAD: the only guideline that put screening in the 'Harm' category was the ACC/AHA Guideline, which used invasive and non-invasive angiography as its investigation tool. This point merits significant discussion, as this is one of the guidelines meeting the threshold for an AGREE II score suggesting it is "recommended for use in clinical practice", and yet differs from the others by NOT recommending screening for asymptomatic PAD and using different (and invasive or potentially harmful) tests. This should be included in the discussion section of the manuscript (essential recommendation).

- With respect to treatment of asymptomatic PAD, the authors mention lifestyle and medical therapies (including anti-platelet therapy, anti-hypertensive therapy, and lipid-lowering therapy, with targets where provided by the relevant guidelines) along with arterial reconstruction. It would be worth commenting on heterogeneity in the guidelines regarding individual classes of drugs, where this is available in the guidelines (suggestion to be incorporated at the authors' discretion).

- The discussion in general is rather brief and superficial - the recommendations above may provide some additional discussion points, but additional discussion of any lifestyle modification recommendations from the guidelines, correlations with overall cardiovascular health recommendations may be of value. Furthermore, the methodology used in this review should...
also be discussed in further detail, given that this is the first attempt at a review of global asymptomatic PAD guidelines. This is an essential recommendation.

Congratulations once more on your manuscript.

**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.

Not relevant to this manuscript

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

Not suitable for publication unless extensively edited

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