Reviewer’s report

Title: CT Imaging History for Patients Presenting to the ED with Renal Colic–Evidence from a Multi-Hospital Database

Version: 0 Date: 20 Jul 2018

Reviewer: Michael Ward

Reviewer's report:

Page 1
28: "6-hospital" should be written out six-hospital

33: CT written twice. Delete.

36, 50: it is my understanding that we should avoid leading with a number. Either restructure the sentence or write it out.

43: I do not think a colon is needed in this sentence.

Page 3
9-12: I think it is more informative to numbers specific to CT abd/pelvis. I am guessing 1 in 2000 risk is for something pertaining to CT neck. I prefer to listing the worst case scenarios to grab attention. Try to keep within the scope of what you are doing which is advocating for less CT use for renal colic - which I think is justified.

42-49: Awkward sentence. Probably put "historically the preferred...condition" in parentheses.

Page 4
4,11: Write out your numbers less than 10.

16: I would probably remove "Unfortunately," Some offering of opinions is certainly OK but probably better suited in your discussion if anywhere. Where possible, leave the interpretation of the results and previous lit to the reader and otherwise just list the facts.

11-16: I don't understand the relevance of the first half of this sentence. Is this an average for all CT scans? Probably could just list radiation of CT abd/pelvis

Page 5
This needs to be more clear. It sounds like a priori study where data was obtained via retrospective chart review. Confusing to read that "Subjects were verbally consented" and later to read "a waiver of consent for data." If this was a chart review process, then how you selected the patients is paramount. Specific ICD 10 codes? Was there a different search method? I am guessing you did not have research assistants at 6 different sites enrolling patients 24/7 for 10 months.
You need to include additional information in how your research assistants were trained and whether there was any quality control completed, intra/inter-rater calculations done. Becoming important in chart reviews. If not, should be noted as a limitation.

16: Can you provide how you came up with the number 70.6%? Excluding the peds and pregnant patients. Did you somehow tabulate the number of ED visits outside of your system in a 12-county region?

Page 7
26-28: Not really the intention of your study but would be interesting to look at bounceback rate for the 14% of patients without imaging. Could bolster your argument? Same for US group. The issue with US is that we cannot always determine size/location, etc.

44: Does this need colon?

Page 8
4: Can you better clarify how you determined the previous CT data? I am guessing CTs obtained only through your hospital system. Any attempt to determine if previous imaging noted in history, etc. Likely not and just a limitation as you list.

29: I believe more appropriate to say p <0.05.

Page 9
18-26: sentence should be less definitive. Saying "not resulted in" sounds like we can definitively say CT does not benefit. These results were from retrospective studies in which we can draw causal conclusions. Only investigative/exploratory...may be better to say 'likely,' or 'observed,' or 'showed'

55: "Disturbingly" may be a little strong for a original study. Would probably leave that kind of language for an editorial, etc. Do not want to show your hand too much as retrospective studies are notorious for being subject to bias.

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 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

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