Reviewer's report
Title: Dengue Score as a diagnostic predictor for pleural effusion and/or ascites: External validation and clinical application

Version: 1 Date: 24 Sep 2017

Reviewer: Katie Anderson

Reviewer's report:
The authors seek to externally validate the Dengue Score, a metric they developed using data from two different hospitals in Indonesia, now applied retrospectively to data from a third. The utility of the Dengue Score is intended to lay in its potential to predict plasma leakage based only upon laboratory values, as ultrasound is not universally available in resource-limited settings.

1. The authors should make clear that they themselves developed the Dengue Score. This is further important in discussing generalizability, that the score was developed and now validated in Indonesia.

2. Particularly as this is a retrospective analysis, the time course of measurements and events is critical and, currently, is not discussed. Given that multiple days of lab values are available, what was used for calculation of the Dengue Score (for AST, HCT, platelets, albumin?) Max/min? Values at presentation? Is one Score a reflection of multiple different days? It would also be valuable for validation to know that the ultrasound findings of ascites or effusion came after (or at minimum, on the same day) the relevant lab values. This is essential for making this tool clinically useful - a clear presentation of the time-course and a discussion of how this tool would reasonably be applied. Obviously, the most valuable tool would be one which could predict plasma leakage at the time of presentation - or, failing that, predict it in advance. The least valuable tool would be one in which the laboratory values of interest reach their peak or nadir after the development of plasma leakage. At present, we don't know which tool we have.
3. How should a tool such as this, with laboratory cut-points that may vary from lab to lab, be applied beyond Indonesia? Would discuss this.

**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.
Yes

**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

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Acceptable

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