Reviewer’s report

Title: A comparison of early versus late initiation of renal replacement therapy for acute kidney injury in critically ill patients: an updated systematic review and meta-analysis of randomized controlled trials

Version: 0 Date: 26 Apr 2017

Reviewer: Kinsuk Chauhan

Reviewer's report:

Comments to the Author:

1. This is a well-constructed paper that shows comparison of early versus late initiation of RRT for AKI in critically ill patients. Overall a good approach to combine the results from various studies and try to reduce level of heterogeneity.

2. The manuscript is well written and objectives were clearly stated.

Some specific areas to attend to are noted below:

1. The authors have provided all possible keywords in the search strategy but needs to add a few more points, for example use of or/and/exp or use of ti, ab, etc. in the search string. Author can include search string used in different databases as a supplementary material.

2. Author should provide figure legends and titles of forest plots on top of each plots for easy understandability.

Also, it would be interesting to see forest plot by RRT modality and by study centers for primary outcome.

3. Address for possible confounders related to study outcome, which were considered (or not) in different trials (such as, possible post-surgical complications, presence of severe comorbid conditions which could have impact on mortality) in the limitation section.

4. Based on results from meta-analysis, include what would be an appropriate sample size of for a future trial to get the conclusive effect of early vs late RRT on mortality.

5. Consider including a point about generalizability of the results in the discussion section.
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 am able to assess the statistics

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

Acceptable

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