Reviewer's report

Title: Elevated plasma D-dimer levels are associated with short-term poor outcome in patients with acute ischemic stroke: a prospective, observational study

Version: 1 Date: 26 Apr 2019

Reviewer: Lauren Fowler

Reviewer's report:

I have uploaded a file with specific comments so that you can see some grammar suggestions throughout. I really enjoyed this article and think it is well done, but I have a few concerns that I think need to be addressed.

1. How many participants were actually in the study? You say 877 in the methods section, but then you say that 109 died. However, in your table 1, there are 877 people who you have information reported for, but it is unclear if that includes the 109 who died. Did you really start with 986 and then end up with 877 after the deaths? It seems that the 109 people who died should have their initial D-dimer numbers reported and have that listed as its own category in Table 1, or else it should be included with poor outcome, as that seems to be a very poor outcome. It is difficult to see, though, if d-dimer was really a problem for poor outcome unless you report the d-dimer levels for those who died. I think that is a major aspect of the study that needs to be included.

2. I am a bit confused by the statistical analyses you conducted. You list a lot of analyses, but you report only odds ratios (in Table 3), Mann Whitney U results (in Fig 1) and descriptive stats in Table 1 and Table 2. You report p values there, too, but from which analysis? ANOVA? chi square? T test? There needs to be a bit more detail to explain where your results come from. There are no F or t scores listed anywhere, either. And I find it really confusing that you mention relationship, association, and correlation, and yet there does not appear to have been a correlation run in the statistical analyses. This should be clarified.

Once these issues are addressed, I think that this article will be a great addition to BMC Neurology.
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.

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 recommend additional statistical review

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