Reviewer’s report

Title: Spontaneous prematurity in fetuses with congenital diaphragmatic hernia: A retrospective cohort study about prenatal predictive factors.

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Reviewer: Richard Keijzer

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Review of manuscript PRCH-D-16-00166: Spontaneous prematurity in fetuses with congenital diaphragmatic hernia: prenatal predictive factors.

The authors performed a retrospective cohort study in their hospital from patients with isolated CDH without fetoscopy between January 2001 and October 2014. The aim of the study was to evaluate predictive factors for spontaneous prematurity in fetuses with CDH. They analyzed demographics and performed multiple logistic regression modelling to determine variables influencing the prediction of preterm delivery. They evaluated 80 fetuses of which 21 were premature. They found that the only factor associated with prematurity was O/E LHR.

My main concern with this manuscript is that it is unclear from the manuscript how the data were collected. Was this a retrospective chart review (this would have considerable risk of bias, that should be discussed) or was it data from a prospectively collected database.

The authors argue that the relationship between prematurity and CDH has not been well established, but I would argue that this is well accepted, so they might have to weaken this statement. The manuscript actually describes three other studies reporting similar findings, indicating that the novelty of the current manuscript is not very high.

The authors should consider representing the study cohort as a flow diagram to summarize the third paragraph of the methods. This paragraph actually represents results and should also be moved to this section.

The cohort has a very late median gestational age at first follow-up: 29 weeks. I would argue, that most CDH babies are diagnosed around 20 weeks of gestation. The authors have to acknowledge this weakness and give an possible explanation. This also makes the study less valuable, as causing factors for prematurity might have arisen before this point in time.

Certain essential components of the STROBE checklist for cohort studies are missing from the manuscript:

Study design is not represented in the title
In the methods, the authors should address how missing data and lost to follow up were addressed.

Were there any missing data/lost to follow up? This should be mentioned in the Results.

Overall, this is a well written cohort study identifying o/eLHR as a risk factor for prematurity in isolated CDH. The study is relatively small, not very novel and has some weaknesses that need to be addressed before acceptance for publication should be considered.

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 recommend additional statistical review

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

Acceptable

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