Reviewer’s report

Title: Mode of Birth After Caesarean Section: Individual prediction scores using Scottish population data.

Version: 1 Date: 21 Jan 2019

Reviewer: Reviewer 2

Reviewer’s report:

PEER REVIEWER ASSESSMENTS:

OBJECTIVE - Full research articles: is there a clear objective that addresses a testable research question(s) (brief or other article types: is there a clear objective)?

Yes - there is a clear objective

DESIGN - Is the current approach (including controls and analysis protocols) appropriate for the objective?

Yes - the approach is appropriate

EXECUTION - Are the experiments and analyses performed with technical rigor to allow confidence in the results?

Yes - experiments and analyses were performed appropriately

Statistics - Is the use of statistics in the manuscript appropriate?

Not sure - I am not able to assess the statistics in this study

INTERPRETATION - Is the current interpretation/discussion of the results reasonable and not overstated?

Yes - the author's interpretation is reasonable

OVERALL MANUSCRIPT POTENTIAL - Is the current version of this work technically sound? If not, can revisions be made to make the work technically sound?
Yes - current version is technically sound

PEER REVIEWER COMMENTS:

GENERAL COMMENTS: This study addresses a very topical and important question in Obstetrics that is becoming ever more relevant as the number of women having previous CS increases. The authors have used a reasonably reliable database and two independent statistical methods to analyse the data. They have provided some useful outcome data that can be shared with patients considering VBAC and a normogram to try to determine individualised risk. I think this is an important contribution to the literature in this field.

REQUESTED REVISIONS:

Please see comments below

ADDITIONAL REQUESTS/SUGGESTIONS:

This paper is interesting in it approach. The authors should probably enlarge the discussion in line 366 regarding the likely sources of bias in this paper with a bit more information about the database, missing data, excluded items etc. I would also consider removing words such as 'uniquely' (Line 389) and 'revelation' (line 396).

The paper has a strong statistical element and the discussion of the statistics is intermingled with the clinical discussion. From a 'jobbing obstetricians' perspective, it is helpful to be able to review the clinical methodology and results and implications separate to the statistical methods used. The authors could consider de-coupling the statistics and discussing that in a separate section.

There are a few minor typos and grammar edits that need to be corrected.

Line 28 ? associated 'with'

Line 35 delete the first 'their'

Line 44 'disclosure' and 'as to whether'

Line 100 and 101 - this sentence is confusingly worded

Line 105 - remove the first 'and' and replace with a comma

Line 121 - this should presumably be 'one or more' not 'any number' since any number could include zero
Line 126 - what clinical opinion was sought? - was this to determine the 60 variables of data collected?

Line 197 - 'characteristics' is missing a 'c'

Line 242 - 'predictors'

Line 265 - Where I am based (in Australia) 'Asian' usually means from China and SE Asia. It would be helpful for the authors to clarify (eg Indian sub-continent etc)

Line 357 '....data set. This will be....'

As foreshadowed in line 403, the authors should strongly consider developing an online version of the normogram so that clinicians can input the individual data items to derive a probability of vaginal birth. The 'Grampian VBAC normogram' could become the go-to tool worldwide.

Note: This reviewer report can be downloaded - see attached pdf file.

**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:

Needs some language corrections before being published

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