Reviewer's report

Title: Ventilatory abnormalities in patients with cystic fibrosis undergoing submaximal exercise test six minutes

Version: 2 Date: 6 July 2014

Reviewer: Stephen Bourke

Reviewer's report:

This paper provides detailed data on exercise physiology in patients with cystic fibrosis compared to healthy control subjects, and suggests that volumetric capnography in particular might prove to be more sensitive in predicting subclinical ventilatory changes than standard FEV1 and clinical parameters. It is not surprising that patients with lung disease have differences in exercise ventilation when compared to healthy control subjects. The data presented provides some useful baseline data, but for it to be of clinical relevance it would be necessary to see in a longitudinal follow study, whether such changes predicted clinical progression.

Major revisions:

1. The title of the manuscript text refers to the 'six minute walk test' (which is an error, referring to a different exercise test) whereas the submission refers to 'submaximal exercise test 6 minutes' (which is probably what is intended).

2. Some discussion of whether the results indicate impaired lung function rather than reduced fitness and training effect, would be useful.

Discretionary revisions:

1. Consider additional analysis of the data within the CF patients across the age spectrum, to see if the results can be related to the stage of the disease in terms of progression of cystic fibrosis lung disease.

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being published

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

Declaration of competing interests:

I have no competing interests to declare