**Reviewer’s report**

**Title:** The learning curve of laparoscopic percutaneous extraperitoneal closure (LPEC) for inguinal hernia: protocoled training in a single center for six pediatric surgical trainees.

**Version:** 1 **Date:** 10 Apr 2018

**Reviewer:** Hiroo Uchida

**Reviewer's report:**

This study aimed to clarify the experience needed to acquire the skill to perform LPEC adequately. The mean number for getting good skill repairs was 125.1 ± 29.5. These results provide valuable information for planning LPEC training.

You used MOT as an index of proficiency of each surgeon. I can't understand MOT.

In your study, bilateral repair was performed in 454 patients (45.6%). The mean operative time of unilateral repair, bilateral repair, male repair, and female repair were significantly different. Please show how to detect the mean operative time of 10 consecutive unilateral repairs.

The learning curve of each surgeon shows many different results. The learning curve of Surgeon A and Surgeon B is not plateaued in Figure 1.

Why did you set the standard for 20 min? The learning curve plateaued was 125 cases! That shows LPEC procedure is one of most difficult operations.

If you set the standard for 25min, almost all trainees could acquire the good skill to perform LPEC safely within 40 cases.

Please reconsider the adequate skill of LPEC procedure.

**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.
Unable to assess

**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 am able to assess the statistics

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

Acceptable

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