Reviewer’s report

Title: Adult lung transplantation case-volume and in-hospital and long-term mortality in Korea

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Reviewer: Sehoon Choi

Reviewer's report:

Thank you for submitting a good manuscript for JCTS.

In the manuscript titled "Adult lung transplantation case-volume and in-hospital and long-term mortality in Korea", Dr. Yoon and colleagues insisted that there was no association between case-volume and in-hospital mortality after lung transplantation in Korea. It's a somewhat surprising conclusion when considering it has consistently and reproducibly reported that high volume center shows better results in complicated surgeries.

Journal of thoracic disease is an international journal and the readers are healthcare professionals from all over the world, so the topics should not be limited to a single country but must have universality and meanings throughout the world. Based on the manuscript, Korea seems a unique situation regarding lung transplantation. The following questions need to be explained in more detail,

- In-hospital mortality is strikingly high, 32.4% in low-volume center vs. 23.8% in high-volume center, compared with the recently reported 1-year mortality of 16% of ISHLT database. Could you explain the reasons why the early mortality is so high?

- In discussion section, there is a comment about the relatively poor outcome of the highest case-volume center, and the authors say, 'details would require investigation to understand the reason for the relatively poor outcome'. This comment sounds rather serious. Does the surgeon have any critical problem which needed investigation?

- In Conclusions section, the authors insisted that their 'results may be used as a platform for a discussion on optimal organ distribution for transplantation and improve patient survival after LT'. I could hardly understand how the content of manuscript and the 'optimal organ distribution' are logically related. Is there any problem in organ distribution in Korea?

- In methods section and in title, it seems that authors have reviewed about the medical cost and long-term mortality, however in results and discussion there is no comments (or not enough comments) on these topics.
- The average numbers of each institutions were calculated between 2011 and 2016, however the study period of this manuscript was between 2007 and 2016. Is it right? Is there any reason why the two periods are different?

Thank you and congratulate again on your hard work for good manuscript.

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