Reviewer’s report

Title: QUALITY of life, satisfaction and outcomes after ministernotomy versus full sternotomy isolated Aortic Valve Replacement (QUALITY-AVR): study protocol for a randomised controlled trial

Version: 0 Date: 17 Nov 2017

Reviewer: Paulo Evora

Reviewer's report:

Traditionally aortic valve surgery is done through a full sternotomy that is easy to perform. This incision is characterized by the aesthetic problem, leading to the search for technical alternatives such as the one proposed by the present investigation. The QUALITY-AVR Trial is a single-blind, single-center, independent, pragmatic randomized clinical trial comparing ministernotomy ("J" shaped upper hemisternotomy toward right 4th intercostal space) versus full sternotomy in patients with isolated severe aortic stenosis scheduled for elective aortic valve replacement. This is a simple but relevant proposal, as well as having the profile of TRIAL. It may be necessary to improve the quality of the figures.

Level of interest
Please indicate how interesting you found the manuscript:

An article of importance in its field

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

Acceptable

Quality of figures
All images and figures within the manuscript should be genuine i.e. without evidence of manipulation. No specific feature within an image may be enhanced, obscured, moved, removed, or introduced. If you have concerns about the veracity of the figures you should choose the first option below.

Statistical review
Is it essential that this manuscript is seen by an expert statistician? If so, please give your reasons in your report.
Declaration of competing interests
Please complete a declaration of competing interests, considering the following questions:

1. Have you in the past five years received reimbursements, fees, funding, or salary from an organisation that may in any way gain or lose financially from the publication of this manuscript, either now or in the future?

2. Do you hold any stocks or shares in an organisation that may in any way gain or lose financially from the publication of this manuscript, either now or in the future?

3. Do you hold or are you currently applying for any patents relating to the content of the manuscript?

4. Have you received reimbursements, fees, funding, or salary from an organization that holds or has applied for patents relating to the content of the manuscript?

5. Do you have any other financial competing interests?

6. Do you have any non-financial competing interests in relation to this paper?

If you can answer no to all of the above, write 'I declare that I have no competing interests' below. If your reply is yes to any, please give details below.

'I declare that I have no competing interests'

I agree to the open peer review policy of the journal. I understand that my name will be included on my report to the authors and, if the manuscript is accepted for publication, my named report including any attachments I upload will be posted on the website along with the authors' responses. I agree for my report to be made available under an Open Access Creative Commons CC-BY license (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/). I understand that any comments which I do not wish to be included in my named report can be included as confidential comments to the editors, which will not be published.

I agree to the open peer review policy of the journal