Reviewer’s report

Title: Protective ventilation with high versus low positive end-expiratory pressure during one-lung-ventilation for thoracic surgery (PROTHOR): Study protocol for a randomized controlled trial

Version: 0 Date: 11 Dec 2018

Reviewer: Melanie Meersch

Reviewer's report:

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to review this interesting and well written manuscript for the large randomized controlled PROTHOR trial. The nature of the trial design together with the large patient cohort will bring enough evidence to gain new insights. The topic of the trial deals with an important issue for anesthesia management in mechanically ventilated patients.

I would recommend to include the study protocol as part of the supplements. Moreover, here are some thoughts the authors might like to address:

The manuscript is well written but very extensive what makes it in part difficult to follow. Therefore, I would recommend to shorten some sections and translate some sections to the supplements. For instance:

- Rescue strategies for intraoperative hypoxemia: maybe it would be an idea to show the different strategies in a Table (for better elucidation).

- Study endpoints: if the authors include the study protocol, the specific definition of the endpoints, especially postoperative extrapulmonary complications, can be deleted.

- Study visits and data collection: Figure 4, which is actually not referred to in the manuscript, shows similar details as written in the study visits and data collection section. The section should be deleted or greatly shortened and referred to Figure 4.

- Sub-studies: can be deleted since it is surely part of the study protocol.

- Trial organization: Please add a list of participating centers and DSMB partners in the supplements instead of mentioning the different persons in the main text.

Please include a separate section ethics and consent.
In the text, it is referred to Figure 3 before mentioning Figure 2 and there is no reference to Table 1. Please check this and revise.

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