Reviewer’s report

Title: Morbidity associated with systemic corticosteroid preparation for coronary artery bypass grafting in patients with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease: a case control study

Version: 1 Date: 20 April 2007

Reviewer: Nick Scott

Reviewer’s report:

General
An interesting study but the discussion is too brief and they offer no hypothesis or explanation as to why patients in the study group are extubated earlier, and get out of ICU and hospital significantly earlier than the placebo group. This is despite the fact that morbidity is the same in both groups (Tables 4 and 5) and suggests bias since the study was not blinded and could have been. I think a statistical comparison in Table 5 (p-values) of the control group versus the other 2 groups would also help to show the big difference in morbidity in COPD patients.
Finally there are no recent references eg Sauerland S et al Drug Safety. 2000;23(5):449-61 which the text would benefit from.

Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)
The most important part for revision is Table 4. They should change means to medians since for example in the Diprospan group they have 19 out of 30 patients not in ICU at 24 hrs but a mean intubation time of more than 30 hours!

Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)

Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

What next?: Reject as not sufficiently sound

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

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.