Harald Sourij, MD

Division of Endocrinology and Diabetology

Medical University of Graz

Graz, Austria

May 15, 2020

Dear Professor Fisman,

Major lower extremity amputation is a serious complication of diabetes that reflects the quality of long-term care in a country. Austria is said to be a country with a high rate of major lower extremity amputations, although thorough data on the trend, mortality, and risk factors of this core healthcare quality indicator are lacking thus far. Therefore, we are submitting an original article for publication in *Cardiovascular Diabetology* titled “Epidemiology of major lower extremity amputations in individuals with diabetes in Austria, 2014-2017: A retrospective analysis of Health Insurance database”.

In this study, we retrospectively analyzed the nationally representative Austrian Health Insurance data to measure the incidence and trend of major lower extremity amputations between 2014 and 2017 in individuals with established diabetes. We also estimated short- and long-term all-cause mortality rates after amputations and investigated its risk factors. This analysis has provided the first national-level estimates on the burden and trend of this indicator in Austria and helped in identifying and thereafter addressing specific factors and comorbidities in clinical practice that contribute to increased short- and long-term risk of mortality.

This manuscript has not been submitted for publication elsewhere in part or in entirety and is not under consideration for publication in any other journal. This study was approved by the relevant ethics review committee. All authors have read and approved the manuscript for submission. All potential conflicts of interests have been declared in the manuscript. We have read and understood the policies of your journal and we believe that our study does not violate any of these. We hope that this publication is of interest to *Cardiovascular Diabetology*.

We look forward to your comments.

Kind regards

Harald Sourij