

## **Reviewer's report**

**Title:** The Rotation Scarf Akin Osteotomy for hallux valgus. A patient focussed 9 year follow up of 73 cases

**Version:** 1 **Date:** 1 July 2009

**Reviewer:** Alan Bryant

### **Reviewer's report:**

The authors should be commended in presenting a worthwhile paper reporting a long-term survey of the combined rotation scarf and Akin osteotomies for the correction of hallux valgus. The study reviews 50 patients (73 feet) over an average postoperative time of over nine years. I believe the title of the paper should be amended to read "50 cases (73 feet)" rather than 73 cases.

The strength of the paper is the length of time post-operatively the patients were reviewed. It is indeed rare in podiatric literature to find long-term follow-up reports.

The authors report on a number of factors relating to patient satisfaction and the incidence of post-op complications in the group surveyed. No mention was made of complications such as DVT, osseous infections or delayed/non-union, so presumably none of these complication arose. Of some concern was the relatively high incidence of symptomatic hallux varus (6%). This presents valuable information to foot surgeons about the potential adverse outcomes associated with combining a metatarsal rotational scarf and proximal phalangeal Akin osteotomy. It is unclear why the authors performed an Akin osteotomy in each case and this needs to be elaborated on as this may have contributed to the incidence of hallux varus.

The factors that weaken the report to a certain extent include the lack of a comparison of standardised pre- and post-operative patient focused questionnaires - although as the authors point out, such research practices were not routinely conducted in the 1990's. The results would have been more informative if pre- and postoperative radiographic measures could have been compared. The authors have not established that clinical goniometric measures of hallux abductus correlate to radiographic measures. An finally, a number of the cases had a range of additional forefoot procedures performed at the same time which may have influenced the patient outcomes to an extent.

**Level of interest:** An article whose findings are important to those with closely

related research interests

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

**Statistical review:** No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests