

Peer Review

Review of: "Costs of Full Endoscopic Spine Surgery: A Narrative Review"

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This narrative review addresses an important and timely topic in spine surgery: the economic implications of Full Endoscopic Spine Surgery (FESS) compared to microscopic or open techniques. Given the growing global adoption of minimally invasive approaches and increasing scrutiny of healthcare expenditures, evaluating cost differences is highly relevant for surgeons, hospital administrators, and policymakers.

Strengths

Clear Objective and Structured Approach

The aim of summarizing cost-related evidence in FESS is clearly stated. The search strategy is transparent, including databases and search terms, and article selection was performed independently by two authors, enhancing methodological reliability.

Comprehensive Summary of Included Studies

The review provides a detailed breakdown of the nine included studies, covering different spinal pathologies (LDH, LSS, CDH), study designs (retrospective and RCTs), and geographic variability. Table 1 is well-structured and improves readability.

Critical Appraisal of Heterogeneity

A major strength of the manuscript is its explicit discussion of methodological heterogeneity in cost analyses. The authors appropriately highlight:

Lack of standardization in cost reporting

Differences in direct vs. indirect cost definitions

Unclear data sources

Absence of amortization/depreciation of capital equipment

Variability in anesthesia type and LOS

Declarations

Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.