Reviewer's report

Title: The added value of using mutational profiling in addition to cytology in diagnosing pancreaticobiliary malignancy: review of clinical cases at a single center

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Reviewer: Prabodh Gupta

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In this study, Drs Malhotra and her colleagues present data supporting the increased diagnostic value of mutational profiling in the study of pancreaticobiliary malignancies by cytology. They analysed about two dozes cytologic specimens and used laser dissection and supernant samples for mutational studies.

The question posed is well defined and merit investigations. However, in my opinion, the sample size, locations and size of the lesions, whether solid or cystic, number of cases studied by dissection and supernant analysis, final pathologic diagnoses and reporting terminology leave much to be desired; these are either poorly or not documented in the present manuscript.

What were the cases that had positive mutational profile and were negative by cytology; their location, size, nature of morphologic changes and final diagnoses should be spelled out.

Similarly, with is indeterminate diagnosis, it appears similar to unsatisfactory, and should be clarified. These concerns lead me to question the validity of results

Minor critique:

Ten months is not one year (L57,58).

How was aggressive disease determined? (L58,59).

What is independent cytology? (L64).

Benign or stable, please define the criteria used (L66).

Why was surgery performed on the benign cases? (L66).

Which case had false positive cytology? (L226).

How would you handle the Mutational data (242-244) in the patient management?

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.