Reviewer's report

Title: DNA Methylation Subgroups and the CpG Island Methylator Phenotype in Gastric Cancer: A Comprehensive Profiling Approach

Version: 2 Date: 8 November 2013

Reviewer: Alfred SL Cheng

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Major Compulsory Revisions

1. In the Conclusion of the abstract, the authors stated that 'High-throughput methylation analysis implicates genes involved in embryonic development and hedgehog signaling in gastric tumorigenesis.' It is an interesting conclusion yet to be confirmed. Although the GoldenGate methylation platform is well-established, potential important biological findings ought to be confirmed by an independent method. The methylation of 2-3 identified genes in hedgehog signaling is required to be confirmed.

Minor Essential Revisions

2. If true normal patients are not involved in the analysis, the authors should change the wording from 'normal gastric tissue' to tumor-adjacent gastric tissues.

3. The authors should then state in the Discussion that 'we believe that the high-quality tissues used in our study allows us to add value to the available scientific knowledge'.

Level of interest: An article of limited interest

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.