Reviewer's report

**Title:** Mutation screening of the RNF8, UBC13 and MMS2 genes in Northern Finnish breast cancer families

**Version:** 1  **Date:** 24 May 2011

**Reviewer:** William Foulkes

**Reviewer's report:**

Please number your comments and divide them into

- Major Compulsory Revisions
  Nil

- Minor Essential Revisions
  A) Unless the authors decide to ask other researchers outside of Finland to collaborate with them, the abstract should conclude: The present data suggest that mutations in RNF8, UBC13 and MMS2 genes unlikely make any sizeable contribution to breast cancer predisposition in Northern Finland.

  B) In the section, Methods, Study population - the text reads -

  1) three or more cases of breast and/or ovarian cancer in first or second-degree relatives Please describe the median age and the range of ages at diagnosis for this category.

- Discretionary Revisions

  It would be helpful if the authors could summarize in a table known mutation analysis studies of BRCA1/2 interacting proteins and their findings and perhaps a table listing genes that remain to be studied? Essentially the point is here - why did the authors select these genes rather than other ones? the explanation given is ok as far as it goes, but there are other genes they could have chosen. What results have been obtained for ABRAXAS, MERIT40, BRCC45 and BRCC36, for example?

  Please describe the program used to generate the CIs - the logit method gives these CIs but Gart's method gives broader intervals, for example.

**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: none