Reviewer's report

**Title:** Epidemiological evaluation of concordance between initial diagnosis and central pathology review in a comprehensive and prospective series of sarcoma patients in the Rhone-Alpes region

**Version:** 3 Date: 13 November 2009

**Reviewer:** Christel Bremer Lajer

**Reviewer's report:**

Discretionary Revisions

1. The subject is relevant and the questions posed by the authors are well defined

2. The methods are appropriate and well defined, but it could have been interesting to have an assessment of surgical margins, which also are a huge prognostic factor. If a new paper, regarding survival is planned, this must be mandatory.

It is not stated how many experts were included in the expert panel. Are some of the specimens evaluated by more than one expert and if so, have a consensus between experts been achieved?

If the histological evaluation had been made of 2 experts, there would have been a very precise assessment of the Inter-rater reliability. The experts also might have different opinions and we assume the expert is more “right” but we actually can not state that in this study, but only that the diagnosis is very difficult to assess and there is very little concordance. In that sense the authors seem right in concluding that “the inexperience of non-specialized pathologists with the multitude and complexity of sarcoma tumors, and the non availability of new molecular diagnostic tools are essential. Also a centralized pathological review, a rapid and efficient help with access to molecular biology analysis seem of vital importance in these rare tumours. More efficient information and education of the pathologists also seems essential to ensure accurate diagnosis and grading”.

3. The data seems sound. It would be relevant to clearly report in the number of zero concordance, exactly how many diagnoses are changed from benign to malignant and how many goes from malignant to benign, which must have the greatest impact of the prognosis and treatment of the patients involved.

4. The manuscript does adhere to the relevant standards for reporting and data deposition. The statistics made are appropriate.

5. The conclusions are clear, relevant and well balanced.

6. The limitations of the work are fairly stated?

7. The authors clearly acknowledge the work upon which they are building, both published and unpublished?
8. The title and abstract accurately convey what has been found
9. The writing is acceptable.

**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.