Reviewer's report


Version: 6 Date: 8 March 2010

Reviewer: sean scully

Reviewer's report:

MS: 3510394303263939
Version: 2 March 7, 2010
Reviewer: Sean P Scully
Reviewer's Report:

I have not been able to retrieve any point by point reply by authors to my initial report. Moreover, any changes made in the current version of manuscript have not been marked making it harder for reviewer to keep track of any changes made by authors.

Authors have omitted the analysis of other tumors as was suggested in my earlier critique.

Authors have made repeatedly statements about the incidence of bone tumors peaking in late childhood and adolescence and justifying omitting patients after age 40 years. But they have completely ignored the ‘second peak in incidence for osteosarcoma’ and ‘incidence for chondrosarcoma’ while making such statements. These statements are misleading.

None of my other concerns from my previous report have been addressed:

2) the authors indicate that the upper age limit was selected because these patients would likely be included on clinical trials. While I understand the reasoning here, the cutoff is artificial and leads to erroneous statements such as pg11, pp3, ln 1 referring to survival in older adults. Generally other manuscript use this term to refer to 65+yo.

4) I am concerned that the clinical experts deemed treatment data inaccurate (pg 9 pp1). If this means that the data were not recorded accurately and one assumes that each patient was treated in a similar fashion with standard protocols, then the conclusions regarding survival may be reasonable. However this is a large assumption and really causes the reviewer to question the
credibility of the data.
5) Lastly grouping data on different diseases that are treated distinctly only serves to dilute the message. I would recommend a disease specific analysis of the database with increased depth to help the readership understand the reason for the trends that have been identified.
Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests
Quality of written English: Acceptable
Statistical review: Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.
Declaration of competing interests:
'I declare that I have no competing interests'

**Level of interest:** An article of importance in its field

**Quality of written English:** Needs some language corrections before being published

**Statistical review:** No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.