Reviewer’s report

Title: Skeletal metastasis diagnosed without bone pain showed fewer skeletal related events and death than those with bone pain in post-operative breast cancer patients

Version: 1 Date: 21 November 2009

Reviewer: Daniele Santini

Reviewer’s report:

This is an interesting retrospective study aiming to evaluate if the presence of pain at the moment of bone metastases diagnosis may represent a predictive role of SRE and outcome of patients

Minor essential revisions:

1) The authors have to clarify if they used a validate PAIN EVALUATION METHOD
2) The authors should include in the univariate analysis the HER2/neu status and the grading of the tumours
3) Did the authors excluded from the analysis the patients treated with analgesic for other clinical reasons (ex. visceral metastases) at the moment of bone metastases diagnosis?
4) Did the authors considered the statistical interaction between number of metastases and pain at the moment of bone metastases diagnosis?
5) I strongly suggest to investigate the correlation between pain and SRE7survival in the separately in the following two subpopulations:
a) single bone metastasis patients at the moment of bone metastases diagnosis
b) multiple bone metastases patients at the moment of bone metastases diagnosis

If the authors answer to these minor essential revisions the PAPER CAN BE ACCEPTED FOR PUBLICATION

Level of interest: An article of outstanding merit and interest in its field

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

Statistical review: Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.

Declaration of competing interests:
I have no competing interests'