Reviewer's report

Title: Brain natriuretic peptide precursor (NT-pro-BNP) levels predict for clinical benefit to sunitinib treatment in patients with metastatic renal cell carcinoma

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Reviewer: Torgny Rasmuson

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The authors present data on plasma levels of N-terminal precursor of brain natriuretic peptide in 36 patients treated with sunitinib with metastatic renal clear-cell renal cell carcinoma.
Nine patients had progressive disease and 27 had clinical benefit from therapy.

Major revisions
The clinical material is limited, and not well described. Data on gender, age and prognostic scores according to the Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center ought to be presented. Were any of the patients treated with interferons or interleukin-2 before this study?
How many patients, if any, were operated with nephrectomy?
The number of patients with stable disease and objective response ought to be stated separately. How many patients had objective response, and how many had stable disease?
How was TNM stage IV disease verified, CT scan, MRI, PET/CT? How many organ systems had metastatic deposits?
How was the cardiac function of the patients assessed, ultrasound? Ejection fraction? Other methods?
The renal function of the patients ought to be specified.
The authors refer to a recent report from the same group (ref 10). This study, however, contains 42 patients. Which patients have been excluded, and why?
In Table 1, the number of patients in the different groups ought to be stated.
In Figure 1, likewise, the number of patients in the two groups ought to be stated.

Discretionary revisions
Since the authors have earlier analyzed VEGF A in these patients it would be of interest to compare VEGF A to NT-pro-BNT. Any relation?

Level of interest: An article of limited interest
**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 declare that I have no competing interests.