Reviewer's report

**Title:** Association of nutritional status and serum albumin levels with development of toxicity in patients with advanced non-small cell lung cancer treated with paclitaxel-cisplatin chemotherapy: A prospective study

**Version:** 2  **Date:** 29 December 2009

**Reviewer:** Donald C McMillan

**Reviewer's report:**

With the inclusion of a measure of the systemic inflammatory response the authors have confirmed the hypothesis of my previous review that "It has long been recognised that hypoalbuminaemia is associated with nutritional decline and poor survival in patients with cancer. However recent evidence points to such relationships being secondary to the presence of a systemic inflammatory response (McMillan, 2008, 2009). Indeed, this has been shown clearly in patients with advanced NSCLC (Forrest et al., 2003; 2004; 2005)

Therefore, the present study is limited interest unless they have a measure of the systemic inflammatory response."

However, they do not comment on the importance of their observation that hypoalbuminaemia was associated with both the NLR and PLR. That is "is the relationship between hypoalbuminaemia and toxicity merely a reflection on an ongoing systemic inflammatory response rather than a reflection nutritional status?"

If the authors had read my reviews carefully they would have realised that, in cancer patients, systemic inflammation occurs before hypoalbuminaemia and nutritional decline.

**Major compulsory revisions**

The authors should comment on the importance of their observation that hypoalbuminaemia was associated with both the NLR and PLR and that these, in addition to hypoalbuminaemia, were also associated with toxicity. Also, they should address whether the relationship between hypoalbuminaemia and toxicity merely a reflection on an ongoing systemic inflammatory response rather than a reflection nutritional status.

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

**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'