Reviewer’s report

Title: Which factors influenced therapeutic decisions for elderly patients with oesophageal cancer?

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Reviewer: Andrew Barbour

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The authors report the outcomes for 282 patients >70 years old treated for esophageal cancer at a single institution. The aims of the study were to report the management of elderly patients with esophageal cancer and identify parameters that influenced therapeutic decisions.

The manuscript essentially reports the patterns of care for the authors and some of the associated outcomes. However, no insights are provided into how the treatment decision were made other than according to the members of the multi-disciplinary team. The authors describe clinico-pathologic factors associated with the different treatment groups but it is not clear whether the authors used these factors to make treatment decisions.

It would be useful to understand how treatment decisions were made within the curative and non-curative groups. Can the authors shed more light on this? Ideally some guidelines, perhaps in the form a clinical score, that might predict whether an elderly patient might be suitable for a given treatment might help clinical decisions.

It would also be helpful to describe the outcomes of the different treatment modalities. Further information regarding the selection and outcome of definitive CRT and surgery should be included.

The data as presented do not allow the reader to determine which patients >70 should be offered any particular treatment, whether curative or palliative.

Level of interest: An article of limited interest

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.

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests