Reviewer's report

Title: Association between novel PLCE1 variants identified in published esophageal cancer genome-wide association studies and risk of squamous cell carcinoma of the head and neck

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Reviewer: Dongping Li

Reviewer's report:

Increasing evidence has demonstrated a key role of PLCE1 in pathologic processes, including human malignancies. However, nothing is known about the association between functional SNPs in PLCE1 and susceptibility to SCCHN. Using genotyping, the authors in this manuscript clearly showed that the novel PLCE1 polymorphisms may confer susceptibility to SCCHN associated with tobacco and alcohol consumers. This manuscript is the first report that PLCE1 gene polymorphisms associated with SCCHN case-control study in Caucasian and it is going to act an important and potential affects to this field study.

I believe the paper should be published, if the following minor essential revision is addressed.

Page 4, line 7, put a space before " PLCE1 is involved in cell....."
Page 4, line 13, add a comma after GCA,
page 5, line 21, add a space after " ...SNPinfo"
Page 6, line 18, subscript MgCl2 "2"
Page 7, line 17, "were" instead of "are"
Page 8, line 8, "were" instead of "are"
Page 9, line 6, add a space after "....SCCHN "
Page 9, line 15, add a space after "...only -oropharyns sites"
Page 10, line 14, change the sentence to"...smoking status, alcohol use and disease stage..."
Page 11, line 1 and 2, add a space after "...smokers and drinkers, respectively"
Page 11, line 6 and 7, change the sentence as "...by alcohol status (P=0.005), but interestingly we did..."
Page 12, line 1, change the sentence as" about 30% of all human cancers. Several studies have..."
Page 12, Line 16, change the sentence as" the published GWA studies [8,9]. Our results..."

Page 22, Table1. make the columns of "cases, controls and P" in straight lines.

Page 23, table 2. add spaces between PLCE1 rs3203713 and Non-oropharynx Case lines.

Page 25, Table 4. add spaces between the numbers and parentheses if they are necessary.

**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.