Reviewer's report

Title: Matched-pair analysis of patients with female and male breast cancer: a comparative analysis

Version: 1 Date: 31 May 2011

Reviewer: Ursula Hasler-Strub

Reviewer's report:

1. The question posed is well defined
2. In general, the methods are well described, however it remains unclear whether the two patient populations come from breast units, private institutions, other?

Selecting matching pairs, it remains unclear what the strategy was when there was more than one female patient eligible (“the best match’ was chosen – this should be clarified).

The matching pairs were chosen from a cancer register, however it remains unclear if this selection was blinded (eg. did the same team the selection as publishing the article?)

3. The data are sound and the number of cases of this rare disease is remarkable
4. The article adheres to all standards
5. In the conclusion, there’s not enough stress on the fact that male breast cancer had – despite less aggressive chemotherapy – the same outcome as female breast cancer
6. The limitations are not clearly stated, eg retrospective, cohort study, selection blinded?
7. The authors acknowledge works upon which they are building
8. See above Paragr 5: despite less aggressive chemotherapy male patients had the same outcome. This is an important issue that should be stressed
9. The writing is acceptable

Abstract: in the results, progesterone receptor EXPRESSION would be clearer than only progesterone receptor

Background: it is said that the incidence of male breast cancer was increased by 26%. Referring to the source of these data, these are in situ carcinomas and should be declared as such.

Survival analyses: the first sentence isn’t finished
Dr.med.U.Hasler-Strub, Brustzentrum Kantonsspital St. Gallen, Switzerland

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