Reviewer’s report

**Title:** Preoperative serum levels of lipocalin-2 and matrix metalloproteinase-9 (MMP-9) are associated with prognosis of breast cancer.

**Version:** 3  **Date:** 3 April 2012

**Reviewer:** Jeremy M Taylor

**Reviewer’s report:**

In my review of this article I have continually tried to emphasize that the authors are over interpreting their findings. The history of the many many biomarker studies such as this is that the results don’t reproduce in the next study. This is particularly the case when authors claim to have found interactions, such as this biomarker is particularly useful for people who have low BMI. Frankly I don’t believe those results about the interactions will be found in the next study. So it is disappointing that the authors continue to talk about the interactions they have found as if it was a strong conclusion. So please remove from the final sentence of the manuscript the statement "especially in patients with low BMI and lymph node negative breast cancer."

On page 7 it says patients were randomly selected. Was it really random, was a random number generating used? If not then the word randomly should not be used.

**Level of interest:** An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

**Statistical review:** Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.