Reviewer’s report

Title: Complement activation in astrocytomas: deposition of C4d and patient outcome.

Version: 4 Date: 20 June 2012

Reviewer: S Ashraf Imam

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ABSTRACT.

(1) Is there any previous study which described the significance of C4d expression as a potential prognostic marker in patients with high-grade astrocytomas,

(2) Of the 93 cases of grades II-IV astrocytomas, 26 consisted of recurrent which was not all mentioned in this section. Instead, it was revealed in the materials & methods section. Presenting the data in such a manner resulted in a serious flaw, and

(3) Missing from the text are the defining criteria of determining the intensity or extent of immunohistochemical(IHC)staining. This section should be self explanatory, without having to turn to the method section to find them.

BACKGROUND.

(1) The text in this section is unfocussed and poorly written. For example, paragraphs 01 to 03 could be condensed, focusing on to the aim of the study. Again, text in the last paragraph which begins with the current study quickly morphed back into what reads much like an introduction again.

RESULTS.

(1) The percentage of C4d-positive tumor lesions was significantly higher in pilocytic tumor than those of the high-grade tumors. To compare their findings, they have not provided any data of C4d-positive and/or CD34-positive cells in morphological normal area, away from the tumor lesions. Moreover, they have not included any normal (uninvolved) brain tissue as control in their study. In the absence of such data, comparison of C4d-positive and /or CD 34-positive non-tumor versus tumor microenvironment-associated cells can not be made to understand the biological significance of the finding,

(2) The background staining in Figures 1 and 2 is well beyond what is considered acceptable.

DISCUSSION.

(1) Again, as in the background section, this section is unnecessarily long and unfocused,

(2) In summary, a major revision with IHC data on normal brain tissue may
improve the quality of the manuscript.