Reviewer's report

Title: The predictive value of microRNA-126 in relation to first line treatment with capecitabine and oxaliplatin in patients with metastatic colorectal cancer

Date: 19 December 2011

Reviewer: Philipp Erben

Reviewer's report:

Discretionary Revisions

The authors address the important question of novel biomarkers in patients with metastatic colorectal cancer. They evaluate the predictive role of the microRNA-126 in 89 patients treated with capecitabine and oxaliplatin in a retrospective study. Formalin-fixed paraffin embedded tissue from primary tumors were analyzed by in situ hybridization to detect miRNA-126. A significantly higher MicroRNA-126 expression was observed in responding patients in comparison with non-responding patients.

There were some smaller issues in the paper which may be addressed to support the findings of this study and make it more readable.

1) To the patient table is referred first in the result section. The section of the study population in the methods will be easier to read with this table is referred here as well.

2) In the discussion a multivariate survival analysis adjusting for parameters of prognostic importance in stage I through III disease where introduced. The analyzed parameters and results should be explained in more detailed make this statement easier to understand.

3) Some readers would be interested if the KRAS mutation status is analysed in this cohort and if so if there is a correlation with the miRNA-126 expression or response to administered therapy.

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