Author's response to reviews

Title: Survival of Gastrointestinal Stromal Tumor Patients in the Imatinib era: Life Raft Group Observational Registry

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Author's response to reviews:

Dear BMC Cancer-

Please find attached our revised manuscript that now includes your most recent comments (23 January, 2012), along with a point-by-point logging of the changes below.

Additionally, we are aware of the poor quality with which fig. 3 renders (as .doc), and as per authors’ instructions, we will look forward to submitting a higher-resolution version in .docx format at time of proof. Please let us know if it would be more convenient for you to have this file sooner.

We are grateful for your positive comments, and continued consideration, but please do not hesitate to get in contact should you have any additional questions whatsoever.

All the best in the new year.

Yours respectfully,

Life Raft Group

Ethics statement

If your retrospective study did not require ethical approval, please briefly explain why in the methods section of your manuscript and please also mention who gave approval for the use of the data. I hope this clarifies our previous requests, but please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any further questions.

A statement regarding the ethical considerations for this study has now been included in the methods section (pg 5, para 2).

Comments from the Associate Editor:

Page 4: The paragraph on SDH mutation in pediatric and adult WT GIST is not accurate and incomplete because the authors do not consider the new and
unique data on SDHA mutations in WT GIST (Pantaleo MA, JNCI 2011; Pantaleo MA, Am J Surg Pathol 2011). SDHA mutations in WT GIST should be mentioned in the text and references.

We completely agree and reference to SDH subunit A mutations has now been included in the introduction (pg 4, para 1) as well as in the discussion section (pg 9, para 2) and has been added to the references.

Moreover, Page 11, the sentence "The only center that we are aware of that routinely screens for SDH mutations is the National Institutes of Health (NIH)." is incorrect, maybe it's true for USA but not for Europe, so it should be specified: "...the only center in USA that we are aware..."

Our statement has now been duly amended to reflect the NIH's pediatric and wt gist clinic's catchment area (pg 9, para 2).