Author's response to reviews

Title: Prognostic impact of Proline-, glutamic acid- and leucine-rich protein 1 tumor expression in ovarian cancer

Authors:

stefanie aust (stefanie.aust@meduniwien.ac.at)
dietmar pils (dietmar.pils@meduniwien.ac.at)
sophie pils (sophie.pils@meduniwien.ac.at)
christoph grimm (christoph.grimm@meduniwien.ac.at)
reinhard horvat (reinhard.horvat@meduniwien.ac.at)
dan cacsire castillo tong (dan.tong@meduniwien.ac.at)
bernd schmid (bernd.schmid@wienkav.at)
paul speiser (paul.speiser@meduniwien.ac.at)
alexander reinthaller (alexander.reinthaller@meduniwien.ac.at)
stephan polterauer (stephan.polterauer@meduniwien.ac.at)
peter horak (peter.horak@meduniwien.ac.at)

Version: 4 Date: 5 March 2013

Author's response to reviews: see over
Dear Editor,

please find enclosed the revised manuscript by Stefanie Aust et al. entitled “The prognostic value of estrogen receptor beta and Proline-, glutamic acid- and leucine-rich protein 1 (PELP1) expression in ovarian cancer”, which we are submitting as research article in the BMC Cancer.

In this article we focused on the expression of the nuclear receptor coregulator Proline-, glutamic acid-, and leucine-rich protein 1 (PELP1) in human ovarian cancer tissue. We are the first to investigate the association between PELP1 and patient’s outcome in women diagnosed with ovarian cancer. We have evaluated PELP1 expression together with the expression of estrogen receptor alpha and estrogen receptor beta, as the effect of estrogen and its interaction with estrogen receptor coregulators is gaining importance in endocrine-related malignancies. Please find enclosed the response to the last concerns addressed by reviewer 1. We revised our manuscript in light of the reviewers’ comments and hope to provide an appropriate final version of the manuscript. We thank reviewer 2 for recommending our revised manuscript for publication without further remarks.

All authors contributed to and approved the final manuscript.

Neither the submitted paper nor any similar paper, in whole or in part has been or will be published in any other primary scientific journal.

Sincerely,

Stephan Polterauer
Response to the Reviewer’s report  
**Title:** Prognostic impact of Proline-, glutamic acid- and leucine-rich protein 1 tumor expression in ovarian cancer  
**Version:** 2  
**Date:** 11 January 2013  
**Reviewer:** Ansgar Brüning

**Reviewer’s report:**

The inclusion of 83 additional new serous ovarian cancer samples, as indirectly suggested by the two other reviewers, markedly improved the quality, reproducibility, and statistical significance of the manuscript. Unfortunately, this added a new issue about the manuscript because the previous and preliminary study was apparently not reproducible. I respect the honesty of the authors to include and mention these new data.

Among the data presented, there seems to be a marked switch from ERb- and PELP-positive samples in the first analysis to ERb- and PELP-negative samples in the validation group. Was this possibly due to the high percentage of non-serous tissue samples in the first study? Did the authors, for test purposes, combine the 28 serous samples of the previous study with the 86 samples of the validation study or re-investigated this sample group separately?

*The heterogenous findings within the two sets might be explained by the high rate of non-serous tissue samples in the test set.*

_We thank the reviewer for the interest in the validation process: we tried to combine the two sets of patients for test purposes but unfortunately we could not confirm the findings from our primary analysis. We presented the data of the separate validation study in the paper to provide insight into a homogenous sample of serous EOC._

Independent of the results it must be noted that a manuscript with 2 separate studies (a screening study and a validation study) may appear strange to readers who do not know the history of the manuscript. The Kaplan-Meier curves of the preliminary study remained as prominent results in the manuscript (Fig.3) and suggest a result that could not be confirmed in the validation study. The authors should find a better way to integrate old and new data because new readers of the manuscript will be puzzled.

_We appreciate the author’s comments that the presentation of our results might be confusing for the journal’s readers. Therefore we removed the Kaplan Meier curves from the final version of our revised manuscript. Results of the validation study are not presented in the text - data is only shown in the tables to give the reader the possibility to additionally get an insight into a sample of only serous EOC. We hope to provide a structured final version of our manuscript._

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