Reviewer's report

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

Version: 1 Date: 20 August 2012

Reviewer: Charlie Gourley

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Major Compulsory Revisions
1) The main issue in this study is its size (63 pts is too few with only 50 included in the univariate and multivariate analysis) and the lack of an analysis in a histotype-specific fashion. I accept that multivariate analysis has been performed but this is limited by subdividing histology only into serous and non-serous. It is clear that if studies seeking prognostic biomarkers in ovarian cancer do not adequately account for histotype then the majority of associations detected are erroneous (Kobel et al PLoS Medicine, 2008).

In order to validate this data, a histotype-specific analysis in a larger tumour set is required. It is important for the reader to know whether their as an association between PELP1 and/or ERbeta expression and DFS/OS within the context of a specific ovarian cancer histotype. Analysis without such subdivision is effectively meaningless.

Minor Essential Revisions
1) Describe acronyms at first mention in the text (NRs; Introduction, line 50).

2) Please clarify what 'at least 2' means in Material and Methods, lines 101 to 102.

3) Results, line 154: Please clarify how response was assessed. It is not clear how 73% of patients were deemed to have responded to initial chemotherapy when 30% of the patients had stage 1 disease so should not have been assessable for response.

4) Please confirm that every patient who progressed also died during the follow-up period (Results, lines 155-156). This would be extremely unusual in an ovarian cancer cohort, even of this limited size, to have no survivors living with their disease. In addition, the Kaplan-Meier curves suggest this is not the case.

Discretionary Revisions
1) Add 'apart from FIGO stage' after 'had the strongest impact on survival' in line 196 and p250.

Level of interest: An article of limited interest
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