Reviewer's report

Title: Cancer survivors in Switzerland: a rapidly growing population to care for

Version: 1 Date: 28 March 2013

Reviewer: roberta de angelis

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Minor essential revisions

1. A major limitation/assumption of the study is that prevalence estimation at the national level is based on just 4 registries covering a limited portion of the national population (26%).

A way to test the representativeness of these local data is to compare the expected mortality rates derived from the Piamod fit of incidence data against the observed national rates from Swiss Official Statistics. This comparison is cited at the end of the section on Statistical Methods, but there is no description of the corresponding results (SSQ differences). The authors could describe the results of this validation and thus provide the readers with more solid justifications to the statement at the end of the Discussion section “We are therefore confident that estimates reflect the true situation …”

2. Discussion, penultimate paragraph

Could the authors rephrase the sentence “We used mortality data, available in …thus provide for missing incidence data” ? It seems out of the context and not very clear

Discretionary revisions

1. Time projections to 2020 were done with the Piamod method. The join-point analysis was then applied to the estimated prevalence rates 1990-2020 to identify points of change, type of trend and APC values. The results are given just for all cancers combined. The authors could consider the possibility to give results on projections to 2020 also for the specific cancer sites in exam

Minor issues not for publication

1. Discussion, fourth paragraph

According to our estimates, the biggest group …those living with MORE than 5 years

2. Discussion, second paragraph

The reference year for the prevalence values in other countries should be reported, so as to allow the reader to understand if time periods are comparable (differences of few years can have a high impact on prevalence estimates)
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