Reviewer's report

Title: SISH/CISH or qPCR as alternative techniques to FISH for determination of HER2 amplification status on breast tumors core needle biopsies: A multicenter experience based on 840 cases

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Reviewer: Merdol Ibrahim

Reviewer's report:

The authors have put forward a very nice collaborative study encompassing the protein, gene and alternative qPCR techniques on breast carcinomas showing the full range of IHC membrane expression (0,1+,2+,3+). The authors also clearly demonstrate that alternative techniques of qPCR on paraffin embedded material yield good concordance results when compared to FISH and more importantly is a technique which can be incorporated in every-day laboratory procedures.

Minor Essential Revisions

a. In the abstract; methods sections, 6th line stating “...commercially available SISH (n=10) or CISH (n=5)...”, I would suggest that the ‘n=’ numbers are removed as this appears to refer to the centre numbers rather than actual cases studied which is much higher and can lead to confusion.

b. Methods: section a) IHC and in situ hybridisation. What was the diameter of the TMA's e.g 0.6 um? This would be of interest as TMA's can have a tendency to show tumour heterogeneity.

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

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