Reviewer's report

Title: Effect of neoadjuvant therapy on scope of surgery and prognosis in Stage IIB/III extremity soft tissue sarcoma

Version: 1 Date: 13 October 2013

Reviewer: Tom Scharschmidt

Reviewer's report:

Major compulsory revisions:
1) The statement was added: "...all patients had at least one vital structures of the following evolved by tumor on presentation: major vessels, vital nerves and long tubular bones." I assume 'evolved' should in 'involved'. Please define what this means. Were the structures encased by the tumor, or just adjacent to it? Most vital structures can be spared with adequate margins if not encased.

2) The statement: "Patients with complete response (CR) or PR (decrease in scope of surgery) were assigned to surgical resection without neoadjuvant RT." is misleading because no patient has CR in this study. Please revise.

3) "On presentation, all 120 patients were evaluated to have amputation as only choice (n=30) or have to undergo vessel replacement (n=79), bony reconstruction (n=11) and epineural resection (n=30)." Please revise and clarify this statement. Obviously some patients had more than one vital structure resected, and it is not clear from this statement.

4) The statement "...besides, in the 79 patients who had vascular evolvement on presentation, all those presented PR (n=13) and 33 of 58 who presented SD (33/58, 56.9%) to neoadjuvant therapies had their vessels spared" is also confusing. Again, what is meant by vascular "involvement". If accurate, a statement here saying that at presentation the surgeon would have recommended resection of the vessel and after treatment it could be spared would be helpful.

5) "our study is by far the first practical proof supporting the use of neoadjuvant therapy in patients who are candidates of amputation."

This statement is too strong.

Minor essential revisions:
1) in discussion: fascilitates misspelled

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

Statistical review: Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.

Declaration of competing interests:
I have no competing interests.