Reviewer's report

Title: SPARC expression in CML is associated to imatinib treatment and to inhibition of leukemia cell proliferation

Version: 4 Date: 15 May 2012

Reviewer: xueying wang

Reviewer's report:

The article clarifies a tumor suppressor role of SPARC in IM treated CML patient samples. However, some revisions are needed.

Major Compulsory Revisions:
1) K562 is BCR-ABL positive, to correlate with clinical samples, levels of SPARC need to be measured and validated in BCR-ABL negative cell lines
2) Data of patients treated with NI were not shown
3) K562 is only one cell line, importance of the role of SPARC in cell cycle arrest needs more data using more than just one cell line
4) The role of SPARC as a tumor suppressor in cell cycle arrest needs to be illustrated using primary clinical samples
5) It was not shown the level of SPARC in IM resistant CML patient samples.

Minor Essential Revisions:
1) Certain Abbreviations like MLL and NI were not explained
2) Subpopulations of cells need cell sorting data to show purity of the population.

Discretionary Revisions:
1) Discussion should include explanations for why SPARC increased to a higher level than HC controls after IM treatment
2) Explanations would be needed for why SPARC level fluctuates and reached the highest at around 3-6 M.

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

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests