**Reviewer’s report**

**Title:** Histological Review of Skin Cancers in African Albinos: A 10-year Retrospective Review

**Version:** 1 **Date:** 1 August 2013

**Reviewer:** Miguel R Sanchez

**Reviewer’s report:**

This is an interesting study to determine the types and rate of skin cancer in African Albinos.

1. While the study is marred by the usual problems associated with retrospective data, there is still value in evaluating the data retrospectively in this particular topic. Because vitiligo can be hereditary, there are possibly individuals related to each other within this population affecting genetic variation so that the population may exhibit lower or higher than rates of genes associated with skin cancers.

2. It is not surprising that SCC was the most common cancer since this has previously been reported in several studies from Africa as has a high number of ulcerated SCCs.

3. Up to now most of the information on skin cancer in Albinos in Africa has come from Nigeria. However, this is a larger study that includes 134 skin biopsies.

4. However, with some changes and better descriptions, the study provide information that is both interesting and valuable in providing care for this population of patients.

**Major essential revisions**

5. The study raises a number of questions and issues that are not addressed. How many subjects were included in the study? One should not expect that only one cancer occurred per patient in this high at-risk population?

**Minor essential revisions**

6. What was the type of melanoma and the Breslow depth and site?

7. Being a retrospective study, use of sunscreen, clothing, and other important factors can only be speculated but any information available would strengthen the results.

8. The writing needs to be more precise. For instance, “…whereas nodular basal cell cancer was the most common type.” In the context of this sentence that discusses two separately types of skin cancer it is clearer to write “… most common type of BCC. “ Also, in the sentence “SCC was classified din three categories according to its most poorly differentiated site,” it would be clearer if the wording was “according to the most advanced differentiated site within each specimen.”
9. No significant statistical analysis was performed.

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

Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being published

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.