Reviewer's report

Title: A retrospective analysis of survival and prognostic factors of male breast cancer from a single center

Version: 3  Date: 4 February 2014

Reviewer: Lydia Choi

Reviewer's report:

Major compulsory revisions
1. Abstract: (methods): this is not a cross sectional study - it is a cohort study. You also can't link causation from a cross sectional study, so predicting prognosis related to TNM stage or lymph node involvement would not be possible from a cross sectional study.

2. General comment: Abstract and Background specifically refer to male breast CA patients doing worse than female, but this paper does not include any comparison to prognosis in female breast CA patients at the same hospital. It would be interesting to see the 5 year survival rates for women at the same hospital.

Minor essential revisions
1. Abstract: (methods): should read "Demographic data, age, height, weight and body mass index (BMI) were registered." (capitalization and punctuation)

2. Abstract: (results): The collective 5-year survival in this cohort (was) 46.4%.

3. Methods: "we checked the records" should read "we surveyed medical records"

4. Methods: "Demographic data, age, height, weight and body mass index (BMI) were registered." (capitalization and punctuation)

5. Methods: "routinely examined in breast cancer patient(s)"

6. Methods: "Each of the patients, who met the inclusions criteria" - should be "inclusion criteria"

7. Methods: run-on sentence - "Obtaining data concerning disease free intervals was extremely difficult in the social and medical services context in a developing society like Egypt, that is why - should read "society like Egypt. That is why"

8. Methods: "standard operative therapy..." - modified radical mastectomy includes axillary dissection - no need to say MRM with axillary dissection

9. Methods should include whether when death information was obtained through phone calls, breast cancer specific death was specified.

10. Results: (paragraph 2) "lymph node affection" should be "lymph node involvement"
11. Discussion: (paragraph 1) "the files of" should read "the medical records of"

12. Discussion: (paragraph 1) "Giordano...found out" should read "Giordano...found"

13. Discussion: (paragraph 1) typographical error - "possible causes that ...may by" to "may be"

14. Discussion: (paragraph 1) - please explain what you mean by quality of care, since almost all patients received adjuvant radiation and chemo it’s hard to say patients received poor quality care - would also be good to include what national recommendations for breast cancer care are in Egypt, if any

15. general comment - please keep consistent the punctuation for percentages - for example, sometimes you write 46,4% and other times 46.4%

Discretionary revisions

15. Hormone receptor negative breast CA has a lower survival than hormone receptor positive. Wouldn't that alone explain the lower survival in your group? The statistics may not show significance because of your small sample size. May be nice to include hormone receptor rates from other studies and compare survival.

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

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests.