Author's response to reviews

Title: Impact of Comprehensive Geriatric Assessment on Survival, Function, and Nutritional Status in Elderly Patients with Head and Neck Cancer: Protocol for a Multicentre Randomised Controlled Trial (EGeSOR) L Brugel1 MD*, M Laurent2,3 MD*, MPH, P Caillet2,3MD, A Radenne 3,4 MSc, I Durand-Zaleski 5 MD, PhD, M Martin6 MD PhD, M Baron7 MD, Heloise de Kermadec 1 MD, S. Bastuji-Garin3,4,8 MD PhD, F Canoui-Poitrine 3,8 MD, PhD*, E Paillaud2,3 MD PhD* *contributed equally to this work. 1. Centre Hospitalier Intercommunal de Creteil, Service d’ORL et Chirurgie Cervico-faciale, F-94010, Creteil, France 2. AP-HP, hopital Henri-Mondor, Departement de Medecine Interne et Geriatrie, Unite d'Onco-Geriatrie, F-94010, Creteil, France 3. Universite Paris Est Creteil (UPEC), LIC EA 4393, F-94010, Creteil, France 4. AP-HP, hopital Henri-Mondor, Unite de Recherche Clinique (URC-Mondor), F-94010, Creteil, France 5. URCEco Ile-de-France, Hopital de l'Hôtel Dieu, F-75004, Paris, France 6. Centre Hospitalier

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Author's response to reviews: see over
Dear Editor-in-Chief,

Please find attached the manuscript “Impact of Comprehensive Geriatric Assessment on Survival, Function, and Nutritional Status in Elderly Patients with Head and Neck Cancer: Protocol for a Multicentre Randomised Controlled Trial (EGeSOR)”, which we are submitting for publication in BMC Cancer.

Survival is poorer in elderly patients with head and neck squamous cell carcinomas [HNSCCs] than in younger patients. Possible explanations include a contribution of co-morbidities to mortality, frequent refusal of standard therapy, and the use of suboptimal treatments due to concern about toxicities. The Comprehensive Geriatric Assessment [CGA] is a multidimensional assessment of general health that can help to customise treatment and follow-up plans. The CGA has been proven effective in several health settings but has not been evaluated in randomised studies of patients with cancer. The aim of this study protocol is to assess the impact of the CGA on overall survival, function, and nutritional status of elderly patients with HNSCC.

EGeSOR is an open-label, multicentre, randomised, controlled, parallel-group trial in patients aged 70 years or older and receiving standard care for HNSCC. The intervention includes four components: the CGA conducted by a geriatrician before cancer treatment, participation of the same geriatrician in cancer treatment selection, a standardised geriatric therapeutic intervention designed by the same geriatrician; and geriatric follow-up for 24 months.
We expect to demonstrate a direct clinical benefit of the CGA on outcomes of elderly patients with HNSCC. If such a benefit is found, the results of the EGeSOR trial may change the healthcare management model for elderly patients with cancer.

This manuscript is not currently submitted for publication to any other journal. We declare no competing interests regarding this study.

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Best regards,

Elena Paillaud

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