Reviewer's report

Title: Characteristics, survival, and related factors of newly diagnosed colorectal cancer patients refusing cancer treatments under a universal health insurance program

Version: 3 Date: 6 March 2014

Reviewer: Ya-Hsin Li

Reviewer's report:

Major Compulsory Revisions

Abstract section
1. I would suggest that the author should mention about the colorectal cancer in the background section. The objective is not very clear from this background.
2. In the methods section, analysis methods should be addressed here.

Introduction section
1. Is that possible the paper can add more information about how serious of colorectal cancer in Taiwan. And how serious of it when comparing with other countries.
2. Is there any information about the proportion of cancer patients refuse to treatment in Taiwan and other countries?
3. Most literature focused on patients refused to chemo, however, this study focused on overall treatment. Therefore, I will suggest that the author should provide more literature on it.

Research methods section
1. Why the paper chooses 4 months as a time point when defining the refusing group?
2. Does patients' comorbidity level will affect their willingness of treatment?
3. I will suggest excluding patients with stage 0 from the study since probably surgery or chemo therapy is not needed in this stage.

Results section
1. In table 3, there is no hospital characteristics information, which is not parallel to the research methods (p7).

Discussion section
1. The study revealed no significant difference in gender between 2 groups, and the paper mentioned about lifestyle and cultural background difference with literature review. What are the background difference between Eastern and Western?
2. I will suggest that the factors which are not related to the results should not be discussed in this section (ex, p15). I will suggest either remove it or move into the introduction section.

3. There is no discussion about the hospital characteristics here.

Conclusion section
I thought Conclusion section is not covered well here. The first paragraph is not a real conclusion. And the authors can add more useful information in conclusion section.

Minor Essential Revisions
1. The survival analysis, there should have begun and track end time.
2. The author should define the urbanization level in methods section.
3. In Table 2, the reference group was misleading.

Level of interest: An article of outstanding merit and interest in its field

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.