Reviewer's report

Title: Comparison of molecular and immunocytochemical methods for detection of disseminated tumor cells in bone marrow from early breast cancer patients

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Reviewer: Francois-Clement Bidard

Reviewer's report:

This paper by the Oslo group is about the comparison of two DTC detection methods in a large cohort of early breast cancer patients. This paper is scientifically sound, and no major change has to be done before publication.

Minor Essential Revisions

1/ In the manuscript I had to review, the references did not appear in the text. The reference list looks good, yet I was not able to check each reference was quoted at the right position.

2/ 3 typos should be corrected in Table 1, as the total number of patient (in the 2 column) does not match the sum of ICC Pos + ICC Neg (4th and 5th column) for patients <55 yo, patients 55-70 yo and pT1c tumors.

Background

3/ 5th line : "has" instead of "have"
4/ 10th line : "does not guarantee disease relapse" is not a scientific wording

- Discretionary Revisions

5/ In the discussion, I would remind the reader the superiority of the CellSearch assay over the Adnatest (a report by German groups) - which also developed TWIST1 RT-PCR.

6/ I would also mention illegitimate transcripts in activated white cells as a source of noise for RT-qPCR techniques.

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests