Reviewer’s report

Title: Macrophage Inhibitor Cytokine 1 (MIC-1/GDF15) as a Novel Diagnostic Serum Biomarker in Pancreatic Ductal Adenocarcinoma

Version: 2
Date: 16 June 2014
Reviewer: Steven Hochwald

Reviewer’s report:

Major revisions:
Several areas require clarification to assist the reader. In particular, there is missing data in the text. When possible, all the results in the text should be described as mean +/- standard deviation.

1) Quantification of MIC-1 mRNA by PCR was done from what type of tissue (Frozen or paraffin)? Please indicate in the methods.

2) Please describe the y axis in the legend in Figure 1a. What is being measured on the Y axis?

3) In the first paragraph of the results—where is the data for this sentence—“increased expression of MIC-1 was not significantly correlated with TNM”?

4) For figure 1b—describe data as mean +/- standard deviation in the text.

5) What does the MIC-1 upregulated tumor refer to in Figure 1C—what is definition of MIC-1 upregulated tumor?

6) Figure 1d—describe data as mean +/- standard deviation in the text.

7) For figure 1e—describe data as mean +/- standard deviation in the text.

8) Add standard deviation to data in the text for serum MIC-1 in validation group.

9) Data for figures 4a,b,c,d,e,f need to be presented as mean +/- standard deviation in the text.

Level of interest: An exceptional article

Quality of written English: Acceptable

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