Author's response to reviews

Title: Polysialic acid is associated with better prognosis and IDH1-mutation in diffusely infiltrating astrocytomas.

Authors:

Katri Mäkelä (katri.s.makela@uta.fi)
Kristiina Nordfors (kristiina.nordfors@gmail.com)
Jukka Finne (jukka.finne@helsinki.fi)
Anne Jokilammi (anne.jokilammi@utu.fi)
Timo Paavonen (timo.paavonen@uta.fi)
Hannu Haapasalo (hannu.haapasalo@fimlab.fi)
Miikka Korja (mkorja@mneurosurgery.com)
Joonas Haapasalo (joonas.haapasalo@gmail.com)

Version: 3 Date: 17 August 2014

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

We are very pleased that You find our manuscript suitable for publication in BMC Cancer.

We were asked to revise the manuscript to state whether a written informed consent was obtained from the patients whose samples were used in the study.

This study observes the Helsinki Declaration, current Finnish legislation and the principles of data protection, laid down by Tampere University Hospital. This study is retrospective and purely observational. The assignment of the medical intervention is not at the discretion of the investigator. The archiving of diagnostic material in a tissue bank involves no ethical problems. Only excess material from diagnostic samples is used for research purposes, with the permission of the relevant Finnish authorities (the National Authority for Medicolegal Affairs of Finland). The Ethical Committee of Tampere University Hospital has given permission for our project (R07042). Research permits have also been obtained on the basis of the Finnish tissue law (the National Authority for Medicolegal Affairs of Finland, currently Valvira: Diary number 7796/05.01.00.06/2011). In these circumstances, especially when most of our glioma patients have died, Finnish legislation does not require patient’s informed consent for this kind of study. Thus no written informed consents were acquired separately from each individual patient.

Our study entitled Complement activation in astrocytomas: deposition of C4d and patient outcome. (Mäkelä K, Helén P, Haapasalo H, Paavonen T. BMC Cancer. 2012 Dec 1;12:565.) was recently published in BMC Cancer. The study had the same study material and acceptance from the same licensing authorities.

To clarify this matter in the recent manuscript, we added the following sentence to the Materials and Methods (page 5, paragraph 1, line 5, highlighted in yellow colour): The study protocol was approved by the ethical committee of Tampere University Hospital and the National Authority for Medicolegal Affairs of Finland (diary number7796/05.01.00.06/2011).

If the Editorial board finds this clarification insufficient, a statement on this subject can be obtained from research supervisory authorities or the representatives of the University of Tampere and be presented to the Editorial board.

Please contact me if You have any further questions in relation to this matter.

Best regards,

Katri Mäkelä, corresponding author