Reviewer's report

Title: Diagnosis and Staging of Superficial Esophageal Neoplasm based on Pre-Endoscopic Resection System Comparable to Endoscopic Resection

Version: 2  Date: 23 March 2014

Reviewer: Pierre de Delva

Reviewer's report:

Discretionary Revisions:

1. It is unclear from the manuscript if any patients treated with EMR where found on pathological examination to have depth of invasion beyond SM1 and therefore moved on to surgery. Although EUS invasion beyond SM1 was an exclusion criteria, EUS can be unreliable it making this distinction. Therefore, there could have been patients that by EUS were treated by EMR but later found to have deeper invasion on analysis of the specimen and then moved on to esophagectomy. In that case the esophagectomy specimen should be the gold standard.

My concern is if those patients are excluded from the gold standard group, how do we know if the pre ER system will identify those patients? If those patient are included in your cohort please state so and consider reporting how many of the cohort had this occurrence. If they are not included, I suggest adding them to make sure that your cohort is as close as possible to actual clinical practice. Could it be possible that the pre ER system would miss a patient with SM2-SM3 disease?

2. You might want to add a paragraph in the discussion to describe the strength and weaknesses of the study. I wonder how replicable these results would be at centers without the endoscopic and pathologic experience of your center.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

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