Author's response to reviews

Title: Human breast cancer and lymph node metastases express Gb3 and can be targeted by STxB-vectorized chemotherapeutic compounds

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Version: 4 Date: 19 November 2014

Author's response to reviews: see over
Dear Dr Cheang,

We are pleased to resubmit our manuscript entitled “Human breast cancer and lymph node metastases express Gb3 and can be targeted by STxB-vectorized chemotherapeutic compounds” by Stimmer et al. With the help of the reviewers' comments, we finalized this submission.

We have improved the title page, formatted the manuscript according to the journal's instructions, and have homogenized abbreviations. These changes and a few others are detailed in the rebuttal letter.

In conclusion, we believe to have responded in full to all remaining aspects, and look forward to seeing our paper published in *BMC Cancer*.

Yours sincerely,

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We thank the editors and the reviewers for their constructive and helpful comments.

As requested, we have improved the title page of the manuscript. Furthermore we proofread the manuscript and corrected all formatting errors.

The manuscript was formatted according to the author checklist and the article template that we could download from the journal's website.

These changes included:
- Use of Arial 16 bold format for chapter titles
- Use of Arial 11 bold format for sub-titles
- Use of Times New Roman 12 normal for the main text and figure legends

Detailed responses to the reviewers' remaining comments are listed below.

Reviewer's report

Title: Human breast cancer and lymph node metastases express Gb3 and can be targeted by STxB-vectorized chemotherapeutic compounds

Version: 3 Date: 14 October 2014

Reviewer: Toshiyuki Yamaji

Reviewer's report:

The manuscript “Human breast cancer and lymph node metastasis express Gb3 and can be targeted by STxB-vectorized chemotherapeutic compounds” makes several points.

1. Gb3 expression in primary breast tumors and lymph node metastases was analyzed using a novel method and showed several correlations as below.
   a. The expression of Gb3 and estrogen receptors.
   b. The absence of Gb3 in primary tumors and the presence of metastases
   c. Up-regulation of Gb3 expression in lymph node metastases.

2. Gb3-positive breast cancer xenografts in mice were detected by intravenous injection of STxB subunit.

The former manuscript was once rejected in this journal, and the authors re-submitted the revised manuscript with some improvements according to the reviewers’ comments. They
answered the points as much as possible, and the manuscript is suitable for publication if the following minor points are corrected.

Minor revisions:

1) In p15 L358, correct “estrogen, progesterone” to “ER, PR”.

This was corrected, as suggested by the Reviewer (page 14, line 319).

2) In p15 L362, correct tumor to tumors.

This was corrected, as suggested by the Reviewer (page 14, line 322).

3) In p15, metastasis and metastases are mixed. Unify them to the one (metastases).

We used metastases throughout the manuscript (pages 14-15 and figure legends).

4) In p17 L397, May-Grunwald Giemsa to MGG.

We replaced the name of this cytology staining by its abbreviation (page 16, line 354).

5) In p18 L426, fluorescence-activated cell sorting to FACS.

We replaced fluorescence-activated cell sorting by its abbreviation (page 17, line 379).

6) In p21 L502, Gb3Cer to Gb3.

These abbreviations were unified to Gb3 (page 19, line 450).

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

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
Reviewer's report

Title: Human breast cancer and lymph node metastases express Gb3 and can be targeted by STxB-vectorized chemotherapeutic compounds

Version: 3 Date: 8 October 2014

Reviewer: J. Chuck Harrell

Reviewer's report:

The authors seemed to address all previous comments sufficiently

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

Declaration of competing interests:

No competing interests