Reviewer's report

Title: The efficacy of tumor debulking surgery is improved by adjuvant immunotherapy using imiquimod and anti-CD40

Version: 2 Date: 13 October 2014

Reviewer: William J Murphy

Reviewer's report:

Major-

This study shows that anti-CD40 and IMQ can work together and promote CD8 T cell responses at primary tumor sites. The immune stimulatory and anti-tumor effects of these approaches have been well documented. While CD8 T cell effects are shown it is proposed (and likely) that IMQ works on DCs (as does also anti-CD40) but this needs to be shown. The authors also need to demonstrate effects on Tregs as other groups have indicated that CD40 stimulation may inhibit them. Effects on draining LN cell phenotype and numbers are important.

Minor-

It is important to state whether control injections were given for the IMQ it experiments and that simple it injections can cause immune and inflammatory stimulation.

The figure legends need more detail on the treatment regimen.

Other groups (ie Murphy et al and studies by Wiltrout et al) have used CD40 stimulation in a renal cell/nephrectomy model and these should be cited.

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 I have no competing interests.