Reviewer's report

Title: Epigenetic alterations of the keratin 13 gene in oral squamous cell carcinoma

Version: 2
Date: 24 September 2014
Reviewer: Dawidson Gomes

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The aim of this study is to identify the epigenetic alterations of the KRT13 gene in OSCCs oral squamous cell carcinoma (OSCCs). The article is interesting and well written. The only major point is the necessity to perform densitometric analyses in all western blots.

Minor points:
1) Page 6, 123th line: Please include the method and reference used for qPCR data normalization.
2) Page 6, 127th line: How much protein was used for the western blots?
3) Page 6, 135th line: Please include the dilution of the antibodies
4) Page 6, 142th line: Which negative control was used for the Immunofluorescence?
5) The authors state in page 9, lines 192-194 that “KRT13 protein levels were significantly decreased in the HSC4 and HSC3 cells compared with the HaCaT cells, and almost absent in the SAS cells (Figure 1A)”. It is recommended to perform a densitometry followed by statistical analyses of the western blots results to state that KRT13 protein levels were “significantly” decreased in the HSC4 and HSC3 cells compared with the HaCaT cells.
6) Page 9, lines 195-195. The authors state that “Immunofluorescence microscopy revealed high cytoplasmic expression of KRT13 protein in the HaCaT cells, but not in the OSCC cell lines (Figure 1B)”. The authors used standard immunofluorescence to look at the subcellular localization of the KRT13. It is recommended to use confocal microscopy to state the correct subcellular localization of this protein.
7) Page 20, 439th line: How many western blots were performed?
8) About Figure 2: Is the groups compared with HaCat? Please include this information in the legend. The units in the y axis is fold change? Please correct this information in all qPCR graphs.

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