Reviewer's report

Title: HFE C282Y and H63D in Adults with Malignancies in a Community Medical Oncology Practice

Version: 2 Date: 22 September 2003

Reviewer: Victor Kiri

Reviewer's report:

General
The authors referred to an apparent age-related susceptibility to malignancy in persons with C282Y (accredited to a previously published study), which they claimed was contrary to their finding. However, I am not convinced that theirs was designed sufficiently enough to discount possible age-effect. The claim that there was no bias that favored selection of patients of a certain age because "the present cohort of patients consisted of consecutive patients with malignancy who were evaluated in a community medical oncology practice" was clearly not sufficient. This was an observational study and not a controlled trial. As such, if age is a possible confounder or indeed, if you wish to eliminate age as a factor, then the correct approach is either to adjust for age in the analysis (i.e. stratification) or match controls to the patients with malignancy.

I am therefore unable to recommend acceptance.

Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

Minor Compulsory Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)

Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)

1. As stated under "General" above.

Advice on publication: Unable to decide on acceptance or rejection until the authors have responded to the major compulsory revisions

Level of interest: A paper whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

Quality of written English: Acceptable