Reviewer's report

Title: A Preliminary study of p53 and c-erbB-2 expression in gallbladder cancer in Indian patients

Version: 4 Date: 6 January 2006

Reviewer: Niki J Agnantis

Reviewer's report:

General
> 1. Is the question posed by the authors new and well defined?
The question is not new, since there are several relevant papers in the literature.

> 2. Are the methods appropriate and well described, and are sufficient details provided to replicate the work?
Yes

> 3. Are the data sound and well controlled?
No. The immunohistochemical data for c-erbb2, as presented in the provided figures, are not convincing. The staining appears to be mainly cytoplasmic, with some attenuation in the submembranous area, but there is no clear-cut membranous staining. As is well-known, only the membranous staining of c-erbb2 appears to be meaningful.

> 4. Does the manuscript adhere to the relevant standards for reporting and data deposition?
Yes

> 5. Are the discussion and conclusions well balanced and adequately supported by the data?
No. It is also surprising that the authors provide a very high percentage of gallbladder carcinomas in their series.

> 6. Do the title and abstract accurately convey what has been found?
No. From the results it appears that there is only one case with co-expression of p53 and c-erbb2.

> 7. Is the writing acceptable?
Yes

Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)
The authors should change the title, since it does not accurately depict their results. More cases should be examined, in order to acquire statistically significant data for the co-expression. They should improve the immunohistochemical method used for the detection of c-erbb2 and change the relevant figures. They should also add in the Discussion the relevance of cytoplasmic c-erbb2 staining.
Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)

Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

**What next?**: Unable to decide on acceptance or rejection until the authors have responded to the major compulsory revisions

**Level of interest**: An article of limited interest

**Quality of written English**: Acceptable

**Statistical review**: No

**Declaration of competing interests**:

'I declare that I have no competing interests'