Reviewer's report

Title: Somatic VHL gene alterations in MEN2-associated medullary thyroid carcinoma

Version: 2 Date: 1 April 2006

Reviewer: Sebastiano Filetti

Reviewer's report:

General

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

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

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Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

The manuscript of Koch et al. addresses the question whether somatic VHL gene alterations play an important role in MEN2A-associated MTC. The study is well performed, methods are appropriate and well described, and the conclusions, on absence of such a role for VHL alterations are supported by the data. A second interpretation of the results, about a role in tumour progression rather than formation, is based on a single case of CCH observation and would require to extend possibly the analysis to some more CCH samples.

No major compulsory revision is required

Minor points

1. Some more data regarding the clinical presentation of the disease in the patients examined, including age of MTC diagnosis, presence of hyperparathyroidism and/or pheochromocytoma, other familial cases, should be indicated, possibly in a table.

2. Other cases of CCH should be examined.

What next?: Accept after discretionary revisions

Level of interest: An article of outstanding merit and interest in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: Yes

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests