Reviewer’s report

Title: Prognostic value of p27Kip1 expression in Basaloid Squamous Cell Carcinoma of the larynx.

Version: 1 Date: 13 November 2005

Reviewer: Giorgio G Cortesina

Reviewer’s report:

General
In the present study the authors investigate the potential prognostic value of p27, Ki67/Mib and p53 expression in Basaloid Squamous Cell Carcinoma (BSCC) of the larynx. This is an interesting manuscript contributing to molecular aspects of this uncommon and very aggressive variant of HNSCC. In fact, very few studies reporting data concerning this tumors exist in literature. The author’s findings suggest that assessing p27 expression could help to identify BSCC patients with poor prognosis who may benefit from targeted therapies.

In general, the study is well performed and correctly written. However, the low number of cases makes difficult the statistical analysis.

Nevertheless, the statistical methods here used are not so clear

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

In the statistical evaluation (“methods” section), the authors should better describe and justify the statistical approach utilized to perform the multivariate analysis. Particularly, the authors should better clarify why they used the discriminant analysis and which variable has been utilized as discriminant variable.

For this purpose they are encouraged to add a table indicating the results of the statistical analysis, showing the significance of each variable analysed. In fact, the two tables enclosed in the manuscript only show the clinico-pathological variables and the molecular characteristic of the patients (table 1 and 2, respectively).

Moreover, in the “immunoistochemistry” section, they should add some bibliographic references demonstrating the validity of the categorized classes of prognostic factors espression (= 50% for p27; =10% for p53 and Ki67/Mib-1).

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

The value of significance used (Pag 2-last line, in the “Results” section of the abstract; Pag 5- last line of Statistical Analysis section) was 0.005. Is this value correct or did they want to write 0.05?

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 importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable
Statistical review: No