Reviewer's report

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

Version: 1 Date: 15 December 2005

Reviewer: Tim Helliwell

Reviewer's report:

General

This is a potentially interesting study providing new data on p27 expression in the uncommon basaloid variant of laryngeal squamous carcinoma. The introduction and discussion are useful and the figures are clear. The bibliography is appropriate.

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

Methods:
The authors need to give more detail on the methods of assessment of the immunocytochemical staining:
what area of tumour was evaluated?
what magnification was used?
what criteria were used to determine positivity or negativity for each cell?
how did the pattern of staining vary in different parts of the tumour, and how was this allowed for in the assessment?
how much variation was there between observers?
how were the cut-off points for high and low expression determined? if these are arbitrary cut-off points, how critical is the precise % value in influencing the results?

In the results section the authors should:
1. provide raw data with median % score and range for each antibody and each case.
2. the second paragraph of the results should be moved to later in the results after the data have been presented.
3. the second half of the fourth paragraph (description of immuno work) should be moved to the end of the second paragraph - some description of intratumoural variability would be useful here.
4. data should be presented (median, range) on p53 and Ki67 results, as they have been used in the analysis but are not presented.

In the discussion:
1. there is mention that Ki67 and p53 stained more intensely and diffusely in DOD patients - this does not appear in the results and there is no mention of its statistical significance.
2. there is mention of an inverse correlation between p27 and p53 nad Ki67 - no details are given in the results.
3. there is no discussion of the potential prognostic relevance of p53 and Ki67 results

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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)
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 whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: Yes

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests