Reviewer's report

Title: Deregulation of SnoN expression in alternate pathways of colorectal tumorigenesis.

Version: 1 Date: 25 July 2006

Reviewer: Kieran Sheahan

Reviewer's report:

General
This is a well conducted, well written research study examining a specific molecule involved in TGF beta signalling, SnoN. It describes the expression of the SnoN transcript in paired samples of normal and matched colorectal adenocarcinomas for the first time. It also enriches the cases for MSI-high cancers and examines differences in transcript regulation between MSI and MSS cancers. The observation that SnoN is never downregulated in MSS cases is interesting and worth reporting. The association of upregulated SnoN with lack of TGF beta mutation in MSI-high is also interesting. The observed association with poor outcome and failure to upregulate SnoN is only seen in MSS cancers and is unlikely to be independent of stage. The number of adverse events is likely too small to make definite comments on this association.

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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)
The two stage D MSI cases seem to have not recurred. Is this correct?

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Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)
Page 8 : last paragraph- 'Our suggested association etc' - suggest specify in MSS cases only and consider stating that this is unlikely to be independent of stage at this point.

Suggest an additional table to present association of TGF beta mutation status and SnoN expression status.

What next?: Accept after discretionary revisions

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No

Declaration of competing interests:
I declare that I have no competing interests.