Reviewer’s report

Title: Real time contrast enhanced ultrasonography in detection of liver metastases from gastrointestinal cancer.

Version: 1 Date: 26 February 2007
Reviewer: Edward Leen

Reviewer’s report:

General
Detection of liver metastasis is an important issue with implications on management and prognosis. With evolving technologies, there is always a need for re-evaluation of the accuracies of the modalities. The authors seek to do so comparing CEUS vs US. The concept is valid but the paper need clarity in the illustration of results and conclusion.

Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)
1) One major concern in the analysis is the use of true standard of reference; if CT is part of the Standard of Reference, one cannot make the comparison between CEUS or US with CT itself. If CT is part of the SOR you can only compare US with CEUS.
2) Re-calculation of sensitivity, specificity, accuracy PPV and NPV are required at the patient level and at the number of metastases level and displayed in the results section and not in discussion.
3) How were the patients recruited and excluded on the basis of which modality? If it was on CT why were the two patients with over 4 lesions included in the analysis?
4) Why include the 17 gastric cancer patients and of these how many had metastases?
5) Why were cysts or haemangioma included in the analysis as they may be a source of false positives etc?

Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)
There are many wrong spellings in the text. Spell check advised

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: Needs some language corrections before being published

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

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