Reviewer’s report

Title: Expression of estrogen receptor beta in the breast cancer cells of BRCA1 mutation carriers

Version: 1  Date: 3 December 2007

Reviewer: Hiroko Yamashita

Reviewer’s report:

The authors studied expression of estrogen receptor beta (ERβ) by immunohistochemistry in breast cancer tissues of patients carrying BRCA1 mutations. There are several concerns about the manuscript.

Major Compulsory Revisions:

1. In “Materials and Methods” it is important to show more details of how BRCA1 mutations were detected. The authors should give the exact name of a commercially available kit and describe their methods in detail.

2. Which antibodies for ERβ and ERα were used? The authors should state the product names and the dilutions used for these antibodies. In addition, the ERβ antibody specificity has not been documented. The authors are requested to describe the specificity of the antibody, because there are several variants of ERβ.

3. It is strongly recommended to show photographs of immunohistochemistry for ERβ.

4. It is not necessary to show Figure 1. The information was summarized in Table 2.

5. At the end of “Results”, the authors state that 16 patients expressed ERβ in 36 BRCA1 mutants with triple-negative phenotype. How about ERα expression status in triple-negative breast cancer in the control group?

6. Is there any basic research to show antiproliferative or other effects of tamoxifen through ERβ in breast cancer? The authors should explain more detail about this point.

Minor Essential Revisions

There are many spelling errors or mistakes.

1. Page 2, line 16: “adâ##” should be “andâ##”.

2. Page 4, line 2: “atâ##” should be “etâ##”.

3. Page 4, line 21; page 5, line 10; Abbreviations: “moderatorâ##” should be “modulatorâ##”.

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