Author’s response to reviews

Title: Meta-analysis confirms BCL2 is an independent prognostic marker in breast Cancer

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Version: 2 Date: 14 November 2007

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We respectively submit our manuscript for consideration for publication in BMC Cancer.

The manuscript is the first meta-analysis of the prognostic role of the anti-apoptotic protein BCL2 in breast cancer. Our data from over 5,000 cases strongly supports BCL2 as a predictor of outcome that is independent of currently used standards and a range of biological variables on multivariate analysis adn provides a more precise estimate of its prognostic significance. This follows on from our previous study in which we showed that BCL2 emerged from a larger panel of markers as the only one that had prognostic power that was independent of current standards on multivariate analysis in two separate large series of breast cancer.

Our work demonstrates the prognostic power of a single marker in breast cancer. Furthermore, the availability of a robust antibody for BCL2 and the applicability of immunohistochemistry make it a realistic option for routine diagnostic application. We believe that our data now provides a basis for the establishment of larger studies, both observational cohorts and clinical trials, to test the prognostic power of BCL2 and to establish its clinical utility.

We look forward to receiving your reply.

Yours faithfully,

Grace Callagy