Reviewer's report

Title: National Mesothelioma Virtual Bank: A Standards Based Biospecimen and Clinical Data Resource to Enhance Translational Research

Version: 1 Date: 14 July 2008

Reviewer: Manuel M Morente

Reviewer's report:

Biobanking development is mandatory to allow effective translational research to flourish. Current article analyzes the design of the National Mesothelioma Virtual Bank and its role for translational research in this infrequent neoplasm, focusing on some aspects considered to be crucial for a well structured monographic biobank network including dedicated designs, funding, IT platforms, personnel and ethical frameworks which, coupled with networked functioning can provide an endless source of samples and associated clinical information of high quality for biomedical research.

Current article is more than an introduction or description of a biobank network initiative; it is a useful example of a well built design which can be very useful for other similar initiatives.

I advise its publication after revisions:

MINOR ESSENTIAL REVISIONS:
- Figures 10, 13 and 27 need, at least, a link. On contrary they should be deleted.

DISCRETIONARY REVISIONS:
1. Quality Assurance Policies: Are external audits programmed?
2. Fig 1 is barely informative. If published, please improve its quality.
3. Fig 2 could be transcribed to a table better than a figure. If published, please improve its quality.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

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'