Reviewer's report

Title: Variation in incidence of breast, lung and cervical cancer and malignant melanoma of skin by socioeconomic group in England.

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Reviewer: Jianguang Ji

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This manuscript uses carefully collected data from all eight English cancer registries to look at incidence variation of breast, lung, cervical and melanoma by socioeconomic status (SES). The major strength of the study relates to the availability of these unique data.

Comments:

1. The authors claim that fewer studies have evaluated socioeconomic status variation in incidence, however, some similar studies were available from the PUBMED. It should be cautious for the statement.

2. The SES was basely only on their postcode of residence at diagnosis in this study, however, as we know, SES could also be influenced by educational level and occupation. It could be better if they can discuss this point.

3. Smoking may be strong confounding factor in lung cancer, unfortunately the data on smoking is unavailable in this study. It should be discussed in detail.

4. Screening could explain part of the differences for breast and cervical cancers. If data for in situ tumors are available, they can best explain the screening difference among different SES groups.

5. The table should be modified using larger font, otherwise it is hard to read.