Reviewer's report

Title: The impact of comorbidity and stage on ovarian cancer mortality: A nationwide Danish cohort study

Version: 1 Date: 9 October 2007

Reviewer: Laurie Elit

Reviewer's report:

General
This is a well conceived and executed work that answers a specific question and controls for potential confounding issues. The sample size is quite large (n=5,213) so that adjustments for age ect are possible.

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Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)

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Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)

In the abstract the authors assume that patients with comorbidities experience a delay in diagnosis and this is the reason for their poor outcome. This assumption is not evaluated in the manuscript. In fact the manuscript is more balanced. The discussion points this out as one possible explanation. Thus this assumption should be removed from the abstract. This paper mainly shows that those with more comorbidities have a worse prognosis when diagnosed with ovarian cancer. Other reasons for a poorer outcome include: compromised immunity, poorer reserve ect. In fact, patients with more comorbidities may actually be diagnosed earlier because they have such a close relationship with the health care system. The author also assumes that ovarian cancer progresses from Stage 1 to 4. This point is also subject to discussion as, there is a school of thought that stage 1 (localized) and stage 3 (multifocal) may be different forms of the disease.

It would be interesting to know the 1 and 5 yr survival of patients without out cancer and the comorbidity scores of interest and to what degree the diagnosis of ovarian cancer changes these figures.

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Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

What next?: Accept after discretionary revisions
Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests