Reviewer's report

Title: Resectable adenocarcinomas in the pancreatic head: The retroperitoneal resection margin is an independent prognostic factor

Version: 1 Date: 17 May 2007
Reviewed by: Simon R Bramhall

Reviewer's report:

General
This is a very well written manuscript that addresses various prognostic factors following resection for periampullary adenocarcinoma. The numbers included in this study are reasonable but certainly not larger than previous reports concentrating on the same area.

Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)
The authors seem a little confused between making this a paper looking at prognostic markers or a paper suggesting that specific evaluation of the retroperitoneal resection margin is important. They might be better concentrating on a more pathological approach and describing how best to evaluate this margin and leaving the more descriptive work on prognostic markers to other studies.

In addition I believe that the discussion is too long and that there are too many tables for the message that they are trying to deliver.

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

Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)
nil

What next?: Unable to decide on acceptance or rejection until the authors have responded to the major compulsory revisions

Level of interest: An article of limited interest

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