Reviewer's report

Title: Chondromodulin-1 directly suppresses growth of human cancer cells

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Reviewer: Ian Cree

Reviewer's report:

This is an interesting in vitro observation showing effects of purified chondromodulin-1 on several cell lines.

Major Compulsory Revisions
The authors should undertake further experimental work to support their contention that the Jak-Stat pathway is involved. Has the possibility that CHM-1 could induce expression of other growth factors been considered? Further discussion of the controls used in the experiments performed, particularly with the adenoviral vector, would be helpful.

Minor essential revisions
Unfortunately, effects on cell lines do not always translate into effects in patients, and it is important to ensure that this is clear. It is perhaps too great a step to suggest that this might be a therapeutic approach and the authors should be more circumspect in their interpretation of the data.

Why were these particular cell lines chosen over the many others available? How was the concentration of CHM-1 chosen?

The figures, particularly the line graphs and photomicrographs in figure 3, are of rather poor quality and should be improved.

The conclusion that further in vivo work is required is perhaps true, but surely more in vitro work should be performed to elucidate the mechanisms of action of this molecule first.

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

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