Reviewer's report

Title: External Validation Suggests Integrin Beta 3 as Prognostic Biomarker in Serous Ovarian Adenocarcinomas

Version: 1 Date: 18 December 2008

Reviewer: Paul Eilers

Reviewer's report:

Major compulsory revisions

I'm confused by some aspects of this manuscript:
1. How was the 0.29 threshold determined?
2. It looks (judging from the number of censored cases) as if more than 30 patients are in the survival analysis. How is that possible when only 30 patients provided RNA of sufficiently high quality?

Furthermore, the statistical analysis can be improved:
3. For relative RNA concentrations logarithmic scales are being used, but not for protein concentrations. For both a logarithmic scale (to the same basis, probably 2, as for RNA) should be used. The scatterplots in Figure 2 would be less skew than. Probably a standard ANOVA can be used then, instead of the Mann-Whitney test. The advantage would be that numerical values of the differences would be obtained, not only p-values.

4. Figure 3A is misleading, because of the broken vertical scale. It now is not clear that the highest point is extremely outlying. Because both x and y are large it has a strong influence on the correlation.

5. A sharper conclusion about the influence of ITGB3 can be drawn by using as a covariate it in the proportional hazards (Cox) model, instead of dichotomizing its range from a log-rank test.

Level of interest: An article of limited interest

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests.