Author's response to reviews

Title: Bevacizumab plus FOLFIRI or FOLFOX in chemotherapy-refractory patients with metastatic colorectal cancer: a retrospective study.

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Author's response to reviews:

Paris, the 10th of September 2009

Dear Sir,

You will find enclosed the revised manuscript of our article entitled “Bevacizumab plus FOLFIRI or FOLFOX as third and further line treatment in metastatic colorectal cancer patients”. (MS: 1172410992367884) and a response point-by-point to the reviewers.

We would like to thank the Associate Editor for its positive comments on our manuscript.

As he suggested us to do, we removed two paragraphs of the survival results and altered the discussion and conclusion of our manuscript rather adding the Landmark figure that was requested by the reviewer 3.

We wish that you will appreciate this revised version and we would be grateful if BMC Cancer could accept it for publication.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Yours faithfully,

Dr Astrid LIEVRE

Response to the reviewers
Reviewer 1:

We corrected the grammatical error on page 3 notified by the reviewer: “CRC patients could not have received…”

Response to the reviewers

Reviewer 3:

We agree with the reviewer that the fact that patients who achieved an objective response lived longer is an evidence. We also agree that long survivals obtained might be the consequence of bias induced by such a retrospective and small size study and highly selected patients, as we had stated in the Discussion: «…. which might be certainly explained by the small size and the retrospective nature of our study. … patients … were highly selected. For these reasons, our results have to be taken with caution ».

Therefore, as it was suggested by the Associate Editor:

- we removed the two paragraphs related to survival results according to response, line and type of chemotherapy

- we made some little modifications in the Discussion section concerning survival considerations. For example, we removed « impressive survival » in the following sentence « The addition of bevacizumab to FOLFIRI or FOLFOX was also associated with a PFS and a OS… ».

- We also changed the Conclusion section, as follows: « … retrospective data suggest that bevacizumab combined with FOLFOX or FOLFIRI may have the possibility to be active in chemorefractory and selected mCRC patients who did not receive it previously” In order to be more moderate in our words.