Reviewer’s report

Title: Testing for BRCA1 mutations using a combination of homogeneous selection criteria and immunohistochemical characteristics of breast cancers

Version: 1 Date: 10 August 2009

Reviewer: Maria Worsham

Reviewer’s report:

I recommend the manuscript be published for the following reasons:
1) it offers much needed additional approaches to identify relevant criteria for testing for BRCA1 mutations. Similar to testing for HNPCC, where immunohistochemistry for MSH2 and MLH1 appears now to be the preferred starting point before undertaking mutation testing, this manuscript begins to offer much needed additional insights into using a combination of homogeneous selection criteria and immunohistochemical characteristics of breast cancers.
2) the manuscript should generate much needed additional follow-up studies to further strengthen or refute these observations. In any case, the demonstration of the utilization of hormonal status and her2/neu, all three traditional breast cancer markers, to further aid in refining BRCA1 testing criteria is a worthy endeavor. No revisions. Accept manuscript as is.

Check spelling.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

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'