Reviewer’s report

Title: Circulating cell death products predict clinical outcome of colorectal cancer patients

Version: 1 Date: 15 January 2009

Reviewer: Hendrik Jan Ankersmit

Reviewer’s report:

Major Compulsory Revision

The aim of this study was to describe the impact of circulating death products on predicting clinical outcome in colorectal patients. This paper was very interesting to read, however, I have one major reservation:

The authors must provide information about pre- or post-operative chemo-schemata. Since circulating death products are increased (as stated correctly in the discussion section) during chemotherapy, neo-adjuvant treatment will influence M30 levels. If M30 levels are independent of chemotherapy administered then indeed M30/CK18 can be seen as prognostic parameters. If not, measured parameters are most likely epi-phenomena due more aggressive treatment strategies in advanced tumor stages (Duke C/D).

Minor Essential Revision

page 5: spelling of "assessed" is incorrect

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:

Dr. Ankersmit holds a patent on CK-18 or fragments in the diagnosis of cardiovascular diseases (Publication number: WO2007121495 (A2))