Author’s response to reviews

Title: Prognostic impact of three immunohistochemically detected markers of neuroendocrine differentiation in prostate cancer

Authors:

M Hammad Ather (hammad.ather@aku.edu)
Abbas Farhat (farhat.abbas@aku.edu)
Faruqui Nuzhat (nuzhat.faruqui@aku.edu)
Israr Mohammad (mohammad.israr@aku.edu)
Pervez Shahid (shahid.pervez@aku.edu)

Version: 3 Date: 9 October 2008

Author’s response to reviews: see over
Reviewer: Pierre-Jean Lamy
The authors must to improve the number of patient's and to include reliable statistical analysis in this study.

Authors’ response: we agree with reviewers comments that to give statistical power for meaningful conclusions the number of patients needs to be increased, however, due to logistic reasons it is not possible to comply with the advice.

Reviewer: Roberto Mario Scarpa
Reviewer’s report:
There are still several typographic errors. In the results there are several references to tables and figures that have been removed from the manuscript. Authors’ response, the manuscript is re assessed for typographical errors and efforts made to correct them. These include line 3 background of abstract section on page 2; line 3 of the same section; page 2 results in abstract line 1 and 3; page 3 introduction lines 11-12 para 1; page 6 material and methods line3;page 8 results line 5 para 1; page 10 para 2 line 1. reference to figures and tables that have been removed are out.

As far as our comments are concerned, the Authors edited the manuscript and tables accordingly. However, table 1 is difficult to understand. Why are the populations who had CgA, NSE and Syn staining done different? Weren’t all the specimens stained for all the markers as stated in the Methods?

Authors’ response, I agree table 1 completely re done.

The paper includes a relatively small number of patients and has therefore a low statistical power. Therefore we do not strongly recommend this paper for publication. The Authors should increase their dataset and provide a more significant analysis before resubmitting it.

Authors’ response we agree with reviewers comments that to give statistical power for meaningful conclusions the number of patients needs to be increased, however, due to logistic reasons it is not possible to comply with the advice.

Reviewer: Ruqian Shen
Reviewer’s report:
One minor concern is that the font of the reference list is not consistent: some are highlighted, others underlined). Hope the authors could improve them during proof reading.

Authors’ response, done.

Editorial comments

1) Please fully describe your statistical methods
Authors’ response sees last para of the methods section.

2) Please moderate the conclusions about prognostic value to indicate that correlations were found

Authors’ response; see conclusions in the abstract section.

3) Please acknowledge and fully outline the limitations of the small sample size used in the study

Authors’ response done see conclusions of the abstract and conclusions at the end of discussion (last para on page 11)

Kind regards,

Dr M Hammad Ather