Reviewer’s report

**Title:** Recent population-based trends and variation in the management of oesophagogastric cancer patients

**Version:** 1  **Date:** 5 October 2009

**Reviewer:** Christopher B Forrest

**Reviewer’s report:**

This is a neatly constructed manuscript that was easy to read. It presented a pithy set of results lucidly and with generally adequate discussion. I have just a few comments:

1. The differences in rates of treatments between groups are terribly small, both in terms of historical trends that you reference in the background and your own data. You do not detect exposure-response effects. Lack of this coupled with a very weak effect raises the concern for me that there may actually be no disparities, that your effects can all be explained by the limitations that you discuss. I think this point needs to be fleshed out more prominently in the discussion and your conclusions.

2. Over the years, there has been tremendous attention given to improving cancer care in the UK. I think the manuscript could be strengthened by adding more of the policy context both in the background and your discussion.

3. And, a minor point, how much of the country did the registry cover? Please offer any further validation of the registry that may have been done in the past.

**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.