Reviewer’s report

Title: The Changing Burden of Cancer in Asia: Clinical Implications

Version: 2 Date: 16 June 2013

Reviewer: Mark Woodward

Reviewer’s report:

This is a nice review of the situation regarding cancer in Asia. It would be churlish to seek to ask the authors to make additional comments in relation to specific cancers, when so much is given, but I would request some changes to the overall statements.

Discretionary revisions

1. Define what you mean by “Asia”. For example, is it just the countries listed in Table 7?

2. Define the subregions in Table 4 and in Table 5. What about other countries from Table 7 that are excluded from these tables?

3. In my experience, personal attitudes to the disease have a big effect on prognosis. In Asia, denial due to perceived shame seems to be common. Please comment on this and how it might be resolved.

4. Big Pharma must have a role to play, as well as the public sector. Please comment.

5. Two reviews of cancer in SE Asia should be mentioned: M.A. Moore et al (2010) (two parts) and Kimman et al (2012); all in Asian Pac J Cancer.

6. The graphs for women mostly simply show us that women have lower rates; the time trends are uninformative due to clustering. It would be better to show the sex-specific results on different scales, then alerting the reader to this, perhaps in the figure title.

Minor Essential Revisions

7. “diseases” is missing towards the end of the first paragraph on p3.

8. The argument about cancer due to “higher” SES on p4 needs some justification. The previous text only relates to poverty.

9. Table 1’s title should include World. If possible, the groupings used should be mutually exclusive

10. To me, the figures look well below publication standard.

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.
Declaration of competing interests:

My Institute has received a grant from Roche to mount the ACTION study of cancer in South East Asia, for which I am the PI. In connection with this, my expenses for travel to two meetings in Asia, where I gave presentations, were paid for by Roche.