Reviewer's report

Title: Elevated Preoperative Neutrophil/Lymphocyte Ratio as a Predictor of Lower Long-term Mortality in Minimal Invasive Compared to Sternotomy Coronary Artery Bypass Surgery

Version: 1 Date: 31 July 2013

Reviewer: Xiumei Sun

Reviewer's report:

First I would not disagree with the authors based on their study, but the data have some biases:

1 The total study cohorts is 1030 patients. The authors divided them to 6 small groups. I don't know how many patients each small group would have, the manuscript didn't tell us. In MICS subgroups, each group would only have few patients in higher NLR category. It is hard to make any meaningful conclusions with few patients in groups;

2 In table 1, some patients with NLR>3.4 had leukocytes 9.70 ±3.13. I guess if a patient has leukocytes beyond normal range, the surgeons would have to solve the problem first before they operate them;

3 The authors included 13 variables in a multivariate cox proportional hazard model to look for risk factors of 5-year mortality in table 4. The whole manuscript didn't tell us how many patients were followed up for 5-year mortality. I think only patients were operated in 2005 were qualified for studying 5-year mortality. 13 variables included in the model means at least 130 patients died who had surgery in 2005. We need to know how many patients had surgery in 2005 and how many of them died before 2011? If less than 130 patients died then table 4 is not correct.

4 As I said above, the manuscript didn't show how many patients were followed up for 5 year mortality, so we can not evaluate figure 1 and figure 3.

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests