Reviewer's report

**Title**: Benign Minor Salivary Gland Neoplasms: A Clinical Analysis of Nine New Pediatric and Adolescent Cases and a Review of the Literature

**Version**: 3 **Date**: 6 December 2011

**Reviewer**: Mohamed Jaber

Which of the following best describes what type of case report this is?: Other

If other, please specify:

This paper is a retrospective study attempts to describe the characteristics of benign minor salivary gland neoplasms among pediatric and adolescent patients of hospital-based cohort between Jan 1969 and December 2004.

Has the case been reported coherently?: Yes

Is the case report authentic?: Yes

Is the case report ethical?: Yes

Is there any missing information that you think must be added before publication?: Yes

Is this case worth reporting?: Yes

Is the case report persuasive?: Yes

Does the case report have explanatory value?: No

Does the case report have diagnostic value?: No

Will the case report make a difference to clinical practice?: Yes

Is the anonymity of the patient protected?: Yes

Comments to authors:

**GENERAL**

This paper attempts to describe the characteristics of benign minor salivary gland neoplasms among pediatric and adolescent patients of hospital-based cohort between Jan 1969 and December 2004. The purpose is to investigate the clinical features of a series of benign and malignant epithelial minor salivary gland
neoplasms occurring in children and adolescents, ages 0 – 19 years, from the LSUHSC School of Dentistry and to compare these findings with well-documented cases previously reported in the English-language literature.

1. Abstract
• Entirely appropriate.

2. Introduction
• Appropriate in length and details. Number of relevant cases has been mentioned.
• Aims and objective of the study should be made more simple, clear and short.

3. Material & methods
• The methodology is a retrospective review of records. This requires little explanation. I would be particularly interested to know whether all of the salivary gland tumors in the area went to dental department. If some of the cases seen by other specialties like ENT or General Surgeon went elsewhere this should be stated.
• The authors stated they collected files from Oral and Maxillofacial Pathology for review. On what basis these files were selected? i.e. all biopsy reports within the specified period irrespective of their details? Or only biopsy reports with sufficient details. How about the missing reports and what is their percentage. The selection process certainly is not clear and author should specify selection criteria.
• Data are collected from patients seen between the time periods 1969-2004. All data are extracted from the files. It’s is not clear on what basis the diagnoses was made, on 1991 WHO-Classification or on the 1972 WHO-Classification.

4. Results
• The results are clearly detailed in a table form and also in the text.
• No statistical analysis was done

5. Discussion
• The present study has several limitations. First, the lack of details in some of the biopsy reports and the small number of patients are the most important issues that limit the results of such a study. Second, these data come from a single-institution therefore difficult to generalize. Thus the authors should highlight these limitations at the start of the discussion.
• Authors should provide statement about the limitations of the use of retrospective data to study the prevalence of diseases.
• Socio-economic status is a well-known predictor of disease distribution. Individuals lower in the socioeconomic hierarchy suffer disproportionately more from almost every disease and have poorer prognosis than those with higher socio-economic status, this important issue is not thoroughly discussed in this study, therefore I believe it deserve further input.
6. Conclusion
• The conclusions are all reasonable and consistent with the data presented.

7. References
• Some of the references do not conform to the journal style.

8. Table and graphs
• All well presented.

Conclusion:
1. Originality of the manuscript: Data original, but the concept is not new
2. Scientific merit: Average
3. Organization: Average
4. Figures and tables necessity: Well presented
5. Clarity: Lack clarity especially material and methods section and discussion sections.
6. Adequate support of the conclusions: Conclusion reflects the findings.

Te case been reported coherently?
Yes

Is the case report authentic?
Yes

Is the case report ethical?
Yes

Is there any missing information that you think must be added before publication?
Yes authors need to add some information, please see report for details

Is this case worth reporting?
Yes after some minor modifications.

Is the case report persuasive?
Yes

Does the case report have explanatory value?
Limited

Does the case report have diagnostic value?
Limited

Will the case report make a difference to clinical practice?
To some extent

Is the anonymity of the patient protected?
Yes

Are there any ethical or competing interests issues you would like to raise?
No

Summary and conclusion
In addition to dealing with the points already made, authors should remain concise and to the point in delivering their data. This means the material and methods and discussion sections can be revised. This sharpness may help against the lack of novel information. The discussion section also could be more streamlined to make its points more crisply.

So, the manuscript in its current format can not be accepted for publication. But only accept if the authors willing to tackle each of the above listed comments.

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

**Declaration of competing interests:**

'I declare that I have no competing interests' below