Reviewer’s report

Title: The red distribution width and the platelet distribution width as prognostic predictors in gastric cancer

Version: 0 Date: 25 Apr 2017

Reviewer: Karen Mulder

Reviewer’s report:

The use of red cell distribution and platelet distribution as prognostic predictors in gastric cancer is an interesting concept with increasing investigation in other malignancies as well.

In the method section, a list of exclusion criteria are listed (line 66-68). No data is provided however in regards to how many patients with GC were excluded based on these criteria. It is unclear in this particular study, if both the healthy control arm as well as the GC arms were controlled for other co-morbidities which can affect the RDW. Furthermore there are other co-morbidities that also increase RDW which are not listed in your exclusion criteria (ie liver disease, advanced subclinical atherosclerosis) How was this controlled for in your cohorts?

As RDW is typically reported as a percentage, please indicate that in your values indicated on lines 102-108. Assuming you are reporting RDW in percentage, both your mean preoperative RDW in GC patients and healthy controls are within the usual normal range (high RDW is usually defined > 14.5%). Furthermore as per table 2, you used a cutoff of 12.85% to define high and low groups. Previous studies have used >= 15%. Please explain your reasoning behind using the cutoff of 12.85% Similarly median PDW has been described as being 13% with a reference range of 10-17.9%. How was the PDW >= 11.95% determined to be the cut off to define high and low groups?

Are the methods appropriate and well described?
If not, please specify what is required in your comments to the authors.

Yes

Does the work include the necessary controls?
If not, please specify which controls are required in your comments to the authors.

No

Are the conclusions drawn adequately supported by the data shown?
If not, please explain in your comments to the authors.

No
Are you able to assess any statistics in the manuscript or would you recommend an additional statistical review?
If an additional statistical review is recommended, please specify what aspects require further assessment in your comments to the editors.

I recommend additional statistical review

Quality of written English
Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

Needs some language corrections before being published

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