Dear Editor,

According to the instructions received he have proceeded to the following changes:

1 - Line numbers have been added.
2 - Ethics: Please refer to paragraph starting in line 138 where it can be read the following statement regarding ethical concerns: "This study was conducted according to the Portuguese National Regulative Law for the handling of biological specimens from tumor banks (waiving the need of specify approval for samples from a tumor archive and used in retrospective analysis) and complied with The Helsinki Declaration statement."

Moreover the study is also compliant with the REMARK and Strobe guidelines (lines 183-185).

3 - Paragraph named "Contributions" was renamed to Authors' Contributions and can be found after the "Competing Interests" section (starting line 324).

Please do not hesitate to contact me in case any other change is necessary.

We sincerely hope this revised version is considered suitable for revision for BMC Cancer.

Thank you very much.

Yours faithfully,

Francisco Beca, MD, MSc