Reviewer's report

Title: The predictive value of Aurora-A for the effect of chemoradiation therapy on esophageal squamous cell carcinoma

Version: 1 Date: 5 February 2015

Reviewer: Julie Izzo

Reviewer's report:

Major compulsory Revisions:
- Delete "predictive value" from title and the manuscript all together: the data presented do not demonstrate prediction, but simple correlation.
- Methods: please provide the details about the Aurora antibody from Cell Signaling used in the study, eg species and catalog number. also provide evidence of validation for FFPE tissue. None of the Aurora A antibodies by Cell signaling has been validated for IHC, thus, considering the novel data provided by this manuscript, the authors need to demonstrate that the antibody is specific for the target protein.
- In survival assessment: please perform multivariate analysis including variables such as stage, histopathology grade, aurora A staining (including both nuclear, and nuclear+cytoplasmic). The effect of Aurora A in survival (in particular in the context of data that are in contradiction with previous observations) could be "random", eg associated with proliferative nature of the tumor or other. A Cox regression analysis will help the reader to better understand the value of his marker (even if not statistically significant).
- Criteria for response in CRT only treated pts: the response assessment seems to focus on primary lesions. If the primary lesion showed response but novel lesions appeared, how was the pt classified? please provide the number of pts that progressed on secondary lesions and evaluate the Aurora expression in those as well.

Minor Essential Revisions:
- How was the 10% cut-off established? Please describe in the manuscript

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.

Declaration of competing interests:
I declare that I have no competing interests