Reviewer’s report

Title: MicroRNA-217 functions as a prognosis predictor and inhibits colorectal cancer cell proliferation and invasion via an AEG-1 dependent mechanism

Version: 3 Date: 31 March 2015

Reviewer: Mogens Karsbøl Boisen

Reviewer’s report:

The authors have provided answers to most of the questions and have made definite improvements to the manuscript. Yet, several problems persist and some revisions have not been made satisfactorily.

Major Compulsory Revisions

1. The authors state that a professional language correction effort has been undertaken in order to correct misspelling and grammatical errors. Yet, the manuscript is still full of grammatical errors and words are missing in several sentences. These language errors significantly hamper readability and need to be corrected. The authors should consider writing a complaint to the company that performed the language editing since their work is in no way acceptable. These are some of the lines with language problems: 81-83, 85-86, 88, 90-92, 112, 114-115, 152-153, 187, 199, 228, 238, 240, 252, 263, 288, 311-312, 316, 322, 324, 332-335, 343-344, 347-348, 359-360, 364-366, 370, 374-375, 381-382.

2. I have re-drawn the plots in Figure 6B and 6C using the data from Supplementary file 6 (6.xlsx) and get very different results from the ones that are shown in the manuscript. I have attached these plots. When using these data, there is no significant correlation between miR-217 and AEG-1 in CRN or CRC samples. It follows that the plots cannot be based upon the data provided. Please investigate this issue and make corrections where needed.

Minor Essential Revisions

3. The description of the 2–[delta][delta]Ct results are probably wrong. This method is defined as such:

[delta][delta]Ct = [delta]Ct,sample(cancer) - [delta]Ct,reference(normal) and

[deltat]CT,sample is the Ct value for any sample normalized to the endogenous housekeeping gene (U6) and

[delta]Ct, reference is the Ct value for the calibrator(normal) also normalized to the endogenous housekeeping gene

The authors report 2–[delta][delta]Ct results for both CRC and CRN samples. But since this requires normalization to a "normal" sample, this cannot be correct, i.e. CRN=normal samples cannot be normalized to normal. The authors have
probably calculated $2^{-\text{[delta]}\text{Ct}}$ values, meaning $2$ to the power of minus (CRN/CRC Ct – U6 Ct). This is a valid measure, but the authors should of course change their text to reflect this measure of expression and describe how the calculations were done in the method section.

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

**Quality of written English:** Not suitable for publication unless extensively edited

**Statistical review:** No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

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