Reviewer’s report

Title: Low rate of mutation and modest effect of SF3B1, U2AF1, and SRSF2 on prognosis in the myelodysplastic syndrome without ring sideroblasts

Version: 2 Date: 9 February 2015

Reviewer: Mrinal S Patnaik

Reviewer’s report:

This is a unique project looking at the frequency of spliceosome component mutations in patients with MDS from South Korea.

That being said, the major limitations are as follows

1. The number of patients included is not large enough to draw the conclusions that the authors have suggested.
2. It is well known that SF3B1 mutations cluster with bone marrow ring sideroblasts and hence in this subgroup it is not surprising to see a low frequency. In addition we and other authors have already demonstrated its lack of prognostic capacity.
3. The methods section contains a large number of technical redundancies, especially details on sequencing of genes and cytogenetic studies, which are already well established and have been published repeatedly.
4. On one hand the authors state that they excluded patients with RS, however in the results they describe patients with RARS. in these studies a central pathological review is critical.
5. IPSS-R should be used instead of the IPSS
6. cytogenetic correlates of these mutations should also be looked in to.

Level of interest: An article of limited interest

Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being published

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

Declaration of competing interests: 

I have no competing interest.