Reviewer's report

**Title:** Cytokine serum levels during post-transplant adverse events in 61 pediatric patients after hematopoietic stem cell transplantation: a retrospective analysis

**Version:** 1  **Date:** 13 April 2015

**Reviewer:** Grant Trobridge

**Reviewer's report:**

The manuscript describes a retrospective study with 61 pediatric patients to examine cytokine and cytokine receptor levels towards improving prediction of adverse events after stem cell transplantation. The data are clearly presented.

**Major Compulsory Revisions**

1) The first sentence of the Discussion states that "The objective of this study was the timely identification of major post-transplant adverse events allowing an early start of adequate treatment in pediatric patients...". However this was a retrospective study. They did not test whether an approach could identify adverse events. As the authors point out later in the manuscript additional prospective studies will be needed to determine if the parameters defined here can accurately predict adverse events. This should be made clear here and in the Conclusions.

**Minor essential revisions**

2) The beginning of the Results section should have 1 to two sentences as an overview of the study setting the stage for approach and rationale.

3) The abstract does not have abbreviations defined and sIL2 is used in place of sIL-2R.

**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