Reviewer’s report

Title: The preoperative platelet-lymphocyte-ratio is superior to neutrophil lymphocyte ratio as a predictive factor in soft-tissue sarcoma

Version: 3 Date: 28 April 2015

Reviewer: Mairead McNamara

Reviewer’s report:

Comments to authors:

I am including some comments to be addressed which may assist the authors in improving their manuscript.

Major Compulsory Revisions:

General comment:

There are many grammar errors throughout the manuscript which at times alter meaning of the text. It would benefit from review and editing by a person with expertise in the field of interest and a good command of the English language.

Background:

Line 87 in background section mentions methylated RASSFIA. This should read RASSF1A and needs to be corrected (figure 1, not I).

In line 88, it is stated that “Osteopontin (OPN) in serum was determined to be a prognostic factor (I presume for survival?) for soft tissue sarcoma”. Please state if elevated or decreased levels of osteopontin are prognostic.

Line 109, it is stated that “To date, PLR has been identified the prognosis in different cancers as a reliable and easily accessible marker,….” – this sentence is very unclear and should probably read “To date, high PLR has been associated with poor prognosis in different cancers and is a reliable and easily accessible marker…. “.

Methods (Subjects subsection):

Line 128 and 129 are confusing: It reads “Adjuvant radiotherapy was administered in 39 patients (17.6%), and adjuvant radiotherapy treatment in 65 patients (29.3%). Radiotherapy is mentioned in both parts of this sentence. Should one refer to chemotherapy?. Please clarify.

Statistical analysis:

Line 144 states “The optimal cut-off value for the lipid profile was calculated by applying….”. I presume this is incorrect and should refer to the platelet-lymphocyte ratio?.
Results:

Was performance status of patients recorded or included in univariable/multivariable analysis? There should be some mention of this as it may contribute to outcome.

Discussion:

In line 238, it is stated that “A combined index using platelet and lymphocyte counts has been investigated as a prognostic factor for some cancers”. Examples of references are then given. There is a published systematic review and meta-analysis on “Prognostic role of platelet to lymphocyte ratio in solid tumors: a systematic review and meta-analysis”, Cancer Epidemiol Biomarkers Prev 23:1204-12 by Templeton AJ et al which would warrant inclusion here as a reference given the inclusion of over 12,000 patients in this study addressing the current topic.

Minor Essential Revisions:

Abstract:

The use of STS without a prior definition within the first line of methods section of the abstract is a little confusing and should be amended.

Figures:

Please provide a description of low and high PLR in figure legend. Is this higher and lower than cut-off as mentioned in results section?

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

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

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

Declaration of competing interests:

I have no competing interests.