Author's response to reviews

Title: Stomatin-like protein 2 is overexpressed in epithelial ovarian cancer and predicts poor patient survival

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Author's response to reviews: see over
Dear Editor,

We appreciate much the second round comments of reviewers on our manuscript and have revised the manuscript in accordance with the comments. The following was the comments of reviewers and the point to point responses (please see next page).

Best wishes,

Yanfang Li, Professor,
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Reviewer #2 (from Dr Balazs Györffy)

Reviewer's report:
The authors have addressed most of the comments with the exception of independent validation using publicly available datasets. I have now re-checked and the previous results I wrote in the first review are valid. The authors should repeat the same analysis using the same settings described in their manuscript for their own patient samples - namely "patients with serous cancer". In "serous" tumors the correlation between "220613_s_at" (SLP2) and "relapse-free survival" using "automatically selected cutoff" delivers a HR of 1.33 with a p=0.00038. This is an important validation of the study in an independent set of 1018 patients and should be therefore added to the results.

Response:
We really appreciate the comments and the nice guidance on how to perform the online validation and we finally got the results. We added the following results on page 15 NO. 308-318:

"Validation of the prognostic value of SLP-2 in ovarian cancer series from publicly available datasets.

We evaluated the prognostic value of SLP-2 in ovarian cancer using online Kaplan-Meier plotter, which integrates gene expression and clinical data from 12 different data sets from 1648 patients. We found that higher mean SLP-2 protein expression in 354 patients was associated with shorter PFS as compared with that in the 664 patients with lower SLP-2 protein expression with serous ovarian cancer (HR = 1.33, Logrank P = 0.00038). These results further suggested that SLP-2 protein
expression is associated with prognosis and higher SLP-2 protein expression predicts poorer patient's survival”.

We also added one figure (i.e. Fig 7) to show the result and figure legend for it.

Reviewer #4  (from Dr Alicia Tone)

Reviewer's report:
Discretionary Revisions
1. Although the overall details of which benign and borderline cases used in the study were added, it would be useful to know the histology breakdown of those benign and borderline cases which had overexpression of SLP-2 (6 and 9 cases respectively)

Response:
We added the following on page 12 NO.247-259: “The 6 cases of benign tumours with SLP-2 overexpression included 5 serous and 1 mucinous type; The 9 cases of borderline ovarian tumour with SLP-2 overexpression included 6 serous tumour, 2 mucinous tumour, and 1 mixed tumour.”

The other two reviewers had no further comments.