Reviewer’s report

Title: Difficulty of predicting the presence of lymph node metastases in patients with clinical early stage gastric cancer: A case control study.

Version: 0 Date: 21 Sep 2015

Reviewer: Alan Lefor

Reviewer’s report:

1. Language Issues
   a. The wording needs to be changed throughout. We do not "predict lymph node metastases"…. We predict "the presence of lymph node metastases".
   b. The conclusion in the abstract "There were obvious discrepancies seen…" is a very strange sentence and conveys nothing. Values of what?
   c. We do not perform "CT". We perform "CT scans". Please change to "CT scan" throughout.

2. Structural Issues
   a. The title should convey the major result of the study. Please re-write the title.
   b. Remove all abbreviations from the abstract
   c. There are far too many abbreviations throughout the paper. In particular, some abbreviations are defined and then only used once or twice. Please remove all abbreviations except EUS, CT, EGD, FDG-PET. All others are non-standard or used too infrequently.

3. Scientific Issues
   a. Please explain the ROC curves in greater detail.

This is a large study of pathologic characteristics of patients with early gastric cancer. Specifically, the authors describe discrepancies in predicting the number of lymph nodes with metastatic disease preoperatively, with pathologic data obtained postoperatively. This is a good study, but the paper needs major changes to make it more readable.

Are the methods appropriate and well described?
If not, please specify what is required in your comments to the authors.

Yes

Does the work include the necessary controls?
If not, please specify which controls are required in your comments to the authors.
Yes

Are the conclusions drawn adequately supported by the data shown?
If not, please explain in your comments to the authors.

Yes

Are you able to assess any statistics in the manuscript or would you recommend an additional statistical review?
If an additional statistical review is recommended, please specify what aspects require further assessment in your comments to the editors.

I am able to assess the statistics

Quality of written English
Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

Needs some language corrections before being published

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