Author's response to reviews

Title: Under-treatment of elderly patients with ovarian cancer: A population-based study

Authors:

Elisabeth Fourcadier (elise.fourcadier@gmail.com)
Brigitte Trétarre (registre-tumeur@wanadoo.fr)
Claudine Gras-Aygon (claudine.gras@laposte.net)
Fiona Ecarnot (fiona.ecarnot@univ-fcomte.fr)
Jean-Pierre Daurès (jean-pierre.daures@inserm.fr)
Faïza Bessaoud (faiza.bessaoud@orange.fr)

Version: 6 Date: 12 November 2015

Author's response to reviews: see over
Re: MS: 3668629641689952

TITLE: “Under-treatment of elderly patients with ovarian cancer: a population based study”

AUTHORS: Elisabeth Fourcadier, Brigitte Trétarre, Claudine Gras-Aygon, Fiona Ecarnot, Jean-Pierre Daurès, Faïza Bessaoud

Dear Editor in Chief,

Please find enclosed a revised version of our article entitled “Under-treatment of elderly patients with ovarian cancer: a population based study” which we would like to re-submit for publication in BMC cancer.

Thank you again for the constructive suggestions for change. We have taken the editor’s comments on board, and have made the appropriate changes in the revised manuscript (modifications shown in blue). You will find below our responses, detailing the relevant modifications made.

We hope that this paper will now be considered suitable for publication, and we look forward to hearing from you again in due course.

Yours sincerely,

Faïza Bessaoud, PhD
Cancer Registry of the Hérault Departement, ICM
208, rue des apothicaires
34298 Montpellier Cedex 5
France
Tel. : (33) 4 67 61 30 34
Fax (33) 4 67 63 42 26
Resubmitted article MS: 3668629641689952

TITLE: “Under-treatment of elderly patients with ovarian cancer: a population based study”

AUTHORS: Elisabeth Fourcadier, Brigitte Trétarre, Claudine Gras-Aygon, Fiona Ecarnot, Jean-Pierre Daurès, Faïza Bessaoud

Editor’s comments:
Thank you for providing adjusted estimates of survival patterns as requested. The description of the results of the Cox regression model given in the statistical methods is, however, confusing. The parameters that are normally estimated from a Cox model are hazard ratios rather than "excess hazard ratios". I suggest that the sentence beginning "A multivariate Cox model...." in the last paragraph on p7 is replaced with :" A Cox regression model was used to estimate hazard ratios for overall mortality, with adjustment for age and other confounding factors including grade and stage. We verified the conditions of the application of the model by testing the proportionality of hazards...."

In addition, in order to make it clear that the effects quoted in the last few lines of the results (lines 210-214) refer to adjusted hazard ratios, I suggest that the sentence beginning "By multivariate analysis..." is replaced with "In a Cox regression model for overall mortality, including terms for age, stage, grade, histology and standard of treatment (Table 6), older age (70+) was associated with an almost twofold increase in the risk of death, and stage III and stage IV disease were associated with significantly greater risks of death compared with stage I disease (hazard ratios of 3.8 and 5.2, respectively). Application of standard (guidelines-recommended) therapy was also associated with a significant reduction in the relative risk of death (hazard ration=0.74) after adjustment for age, stage, grade and histology."

Response:
These two sentences (p7 lines 147-152) and (p9 lines 210-214) have been replaced with the formulations suggested by the editor.