Reviewer’s report

Title: Metalloproteases meprin-α (MEP1A) is a prognostic biomarker and promotes proliferation and invasion of colorectal cancer

Version: 2 Date: 15 Feb 2016

Reviewer: Marcus Hollenbach

Reviewer's report:

Comments to the editor and authors:

The aim of this study by Wang et al was to determine the role of metalloprotease meprin-alpha (MEP1A) as prognostic biomarker, in proliferation and invasion of colorectal cancer (CRC). In this study MEP1A was overexpressed in CRC in mRNA and protein levels and high MEP1A expression was associated with poor survival, tumor size, nodal and AJCC tumor stage. Furthermore MEP1A silencing resulted in reduced cell proliferation and invasiveness. The authors conclude a promising role for MEP1A expression as a prognostic biomarker and therapeutic target in CRC.

The initially submitted version of the manuscript showed several limitations, as mentioned in my former review. The actually revised version of the authors satisfyingly incorporated the majority of the suggestions mentioned in my rating. Limitations were listed and syntax and spelling were checked. Obviously, the authors were due to time constraints unable to perform suggested experiments regarding overexpression of MEP1A and E-Cadherin-silencing. In this way these limitations has been incorporated in the discussion. Furthermore the authors explained reasons for analysis of two different cohorts of CRC patients in "response to reviewers" but not in the manuscript. The passage should be incorporated to "material and methods" or results section for better understanding to interested readers. At least, there is a missing dot in p13l48.

In this regard, the manuscript has substantially improved. To my point of view, the work of Wang et al is now suitable to be published in "BMC Cancer" after a few minor revisions.
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:

Acceptable

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