Reviewer’s report

Title: Validation of the CancerMath prognostic tool for breast cancer in Southeast Asia

Version: 2 Date: 15 Sep 2016

Reviewer: Gareth Ambler

Reviewer's report:

Most of my comments have been addressed. However, there seems to be some confusion regarding some of the statistical methods.

The researchers have complete 5- and 10-year follow-up data on all patients in their analysis and this allows them to perform a simplified validation exercise (since they have no censoring to deal with). That is, they can easily calculate the numbers (and proportions) of patients who survive at these time-points and compare them with the predicted proportions. With this in mind, I do not understand why Kaplan-Meier is being used to calculate the 5- and 10- survival rates (page 11, line 42). KM is not required as there is no censoring.

Furthermore, the researchers state that discrimination was assessed using both the AUC and the c-statistic (page 12, line 7-9). I suspect that the researchers mean the "c-index" which is commonly used with survival data (the AUC and c-statistic are the same thing). I note that the interpretation of the c-index is not quite the same as the AUC/c-statistic (page 12, line 18).

The new Kaplan-Meier plot (Figure 2) is welcomed but could be improved by showing survival for different sub-groups, e.g. tertiles or quintiles of predicted risk, etc.

The discussion regarding calibration slope (page 16, line 17) is a little cryptic ("…predicted survival do not vary enough"). I suggest that this is spelled out more.
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

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I am able to assess the statistics

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