Author’s response to reviews

Title: Solitary plasmacytoma: Population-based analysis of survival trends and effect of various treatment modalities in the USA

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Author’s response to reviews:

I sincerely thank you and peer reviewers for their inputs. In this last few weeks we reworked on our manuscript with peer reviewer’s comments in mind.

Point to point response:

Reviewer 1

Q: Writing can be tightened significantly

I have removed unnecessary verbs and sentences. Also manuscript has been professionally edited with the help of Nature editing services

Q: Background: Providing more detail.

I have remove words like low number and have detail explanation on Li QW et al study regarding how many patients were involved. However, I request you to understand that limited information is available because very few retrospective studies have been done so far. If I go indepth into all the studies, background section will be too lengthy. Instead, I have given enough references, so that readers can review them if needed.

Q: Methods: simple describe methodology:

I have removed the explanation on why we included P- unspecified cohort to discussion. I feel this section to be included in discussion atleast as I want the study to be reassuring in terms of obtaining appropriate plasmacytoma sample.
I have edited the description on seer database. However, as per the reviewer I do not feel its appropriate to delete the entire section. Readers who are not familiar with database should understand why SEER is one of the best database available on cancer Patients(26% and 100% case completeness)

We defined clearly what codes we have included to screen for solitary plasmacytoma patients.

Q: Statistics: would be interesting if we could see if patients progressed to systemic disease like MM

In this section, we included how many patients progressed to myeloma and died by using survival and cause of death information regarding all cases of Multiple myeloma during the time frame 1998-2007. 553 patients progressed. We included epidemiological characteristics in supplementary table. We also studied multivariate analysis comparing patients progressed to myeloma vs patients with initial diagnosis of MM. we found age <60 has lower chances of relative survival, where as males and whites and those who received treatment with RT still had better chances of survival compared to their MM cohort.

Also while describing results I included more descriptors I.e percentages in addition to p value as suggested.

Q: Patient characteristics: state results without interpretation

As suggested, we removed all interpretations in this section. In the results section, we made it more uniform removing, methodology and statistics.

Race: we have never commented on world wide prevalence, in fact we mentioned clearly that data from SEER shows these findings but these should be confirmed with further trials.

Q: Conclusion: soften the language

This section has been edited as per recommendations.

Reviewer 2:

Q: found paper to be well written and conclusion accurate:

We have edited more to be make more polished.

Q: minor Grammatical erros

Paper has been professionally edited with help of Nature editing service

Q: Incidence rates
In our sample 80% of population is white. However when you calculate incidence rates i.e no. of whites effected/ total number of white population at that time gives you incidence rate of 0.3

Where as in African Americans – no. of African American effected/ total no.of African American population at that time gives ratio of 0.4. hence incidence rates are higher when we take group specific population in to consideration.

Apart from these changes, I have removed few figures from manuscript and put them in supplementary files. I would include 6 table and two figures in main manuscript and rest goes into supplementary file.

I once again, thank you for this opportunity. I addressed all concerns raised by the Reviewer’s and I sincerely hope it gets accepted for publication.