Reviewer’s report

Title: Association between tumour infiltrating lymphocytes, histotype and clinical outcome in epithelial ovarian cancer

Version: 0 Date: 04 Jun 2017

Reviewer: Richard Flavin

Reviewer's report:

In this study the authors examine the relationship between tumour infiltrating lymphocytes, histotype and clinical outcome in epithelial ovarian cancer.

The study is prospective in nature and is well powered.

Major comments:

Methods: More information on the evaluation of TILs is required - did the digital programme select areas for evaluation of TILs or was this done manually? At what magnification were 'low and high powers' and at what power was the percentage category based on? How were the percentage categories selected?

How can the authors be certain that selected areas were purely of mononuclear lymphocyte infiltration - how did they account for background histiocytes, plasma cells and how were these cells masked? How were background tumour nuclei masked? Results need to be validated by a human visual read of the slides and by immunostaining for a generic marker such as CD45 for a select percentage of cases.

There is an element of selection bias in the study group with predominately high stage serous cancers and low stage for the remainder.

The treatment regimens for such varying histotypes would invariably influence clinical outcomes and should be outlined and included in the regression analysis.

More images of the differing histotypes with varying TIL percentages need to be included and of much higher quality.

Minor: Please correct typographical errors.

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

No
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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