Reviewer's report

Title: Meta-analysis comparing laparoscopic versus open resection for gastric gastrointestinal stromal tumors larger than 5 cm

Version: 1 Date: 11 May 2017

Reviewer: Lesly Dossett

Reviewer's report:

The authors present both a single institution retrospective cohort study of laparoscopic versus open resection of large gastric GISTs AND a systematic review and meta-analysis. The combination of these two study designs makes the manuscript difficult to review and limits the overall quality and depth of presentation of the methods and data for either design. I recommend the authors split the two study designs into separate manuscripts.

Review comments:

1. The abstract states the patients were "matched" but there is no detail in the methods/statistical analysis of how they were matched.

2. The meta-analysis should follow the PRISMA checklist. The flow diagram is lacking detail.

3. I find it hard to believe that a comprehensive search of the listed keywords yielded only 129 titles. How many titles were reviewed and how many from each database?

4. Figure 2 for the systematic review portion has poor resolution and cannot be interpreted.

5. Why was the Takahashi article included when tumor size and follow was not available?

6. There is no data on the use of neoadjuvant or adjuvant therapy, making the conclusion on OS and recurrence difficult to interpret.
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.

No

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 recommend additional statistical review

Quality of written English
Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

Needs some language corrections before being published

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