**Reviewer’s report**

**Title:** Worse survival in breast cancer in elderly may not be due to underutilization of medical procedures as observed upon changing healthcare system in Poland

**Version:** 2  **Date:** 18 Jun 2019

**Reviewer:** Reviewer 2

**Reviewer's report:**

**PEER REVIEWER ASSESSMENTS:**

**OBJECTIVE** - Full research articles: is there a clear objective that addresses one or several testable research questions? (Brief or other article types: is there a clear objective?)

Yes - there is a clear objective

**DESIGN** - Is the current approach (including controls and analysis protocols) appropriate for the objective?

Yes - the approach is appropriate

**EXECUTION** - Are the experiments and analyses performed with sufficient technical rigor to allow confidence in the results?

Yes - experiments and analyses were performed appropriately

**STATISTICS** - Is the use of statistics in the manuscript appropriate?

Yes - appropriate statistical analyses have been used in the study

**INTERPRETATION** - Is the current interpretation/discussion of the results reasonable and not overstated?

No - there are minor issues
OVERALL MANUSCRIPT POTENTIAL - Has the author addressed your concerns sufficiently for you to now recommend the work as a technically sound contribution? If not, can further revisions be made to make the work technically sound?

Probably - with minor revisions

PEER REVIEWER COMMENTS:

GENERAL COMMENTS: The authors have responded adequately to each of the concerns I raised in my comments. They have also made changes to reflect their responses in the manuscript itself. My overall impression of the revised manuscript is that it has improved quite a lot. However, the revised manuscript still contains a small part of minor issues.

REQUESTED REVISIONS:

I do not think that this article contains enough robust data to evidence the concluding statement made on page 10, line 55: 'MIR is a measure shown to adequately reflect a cancer survival.' The aim of this study was not planned to answer if MIR is a good measure or not in this regard. Statements in the conclusions should be derived from those tested in your study, except for the recommendations you make.

Page 9, Line 37: 'Little has changed since then.' Since when? In Poland? Alternatively, in Europe?

This paper would benefit from some closer proofreading. It includes many linguistic errors (e.g., agreement of verbs) that at times make it difficult to follow. It may be useful to engage a professional English language editor to restructure the paper. E.g., page 5, lines 4-8: 'Old and low performing patients ...'; Page 5, line 44: 'does not hamper treatment results'; page 8, line 13: 'cancer patients a in the age group.'

Fig. 1: The caption 'Breast cancer aged-related incidence and mortality in years 1999-2015': please consider adding 'in Poland' if they were Polish epidemiological data.

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.

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 am able to assess the statistics

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

Needs some language corrections before being published

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Please complete a declaration of competing interests, considering the following questions:

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