Reviewer’s report

Title: Assessing a modified-AJCC TNM staging system in the New South Wales Cancer Registry, Australia

Version: 0 Date: 06 Jun 2019

Reviewer: Tomohiro Matsuda

Reviewer's report:

The reviewed manuscript describes a study examining Registry-Derived stage, and Degree of Spread (DoS) as substitute for AJCC-TNM stage, recorded for all applicable cancers in New South Wales Cancer Registry. The manuscript is well written and easy to understand for the readers. Since AJCC or UICC staging system is complicated for tumor registrars in the hospitals, not many PBCRs adopt TNM staging. This manuscript makes an evidence for validity of RD stage and DoS in clinical practice.

I hope that the following comments will help the authors in the refining of the manuscript to allow for re-submission in the time frame allowed.

I believe the objective of this study is to prove validity of the two staging systems other than AJCC TNM. As conclusions, the authors stated that especially RD staging provides useful information for clinical decision making and routine collection of RD staging is one of the options in the Australian PBCR.

The authors explained the reason for examining RD-stage or a similar simple staging system in the manuscript as availability of TNM values obtained from notification sources routinely provided to PBCRs and derived by applying simplified AJCC business rules developed by the VicCR. However, the other countries are not familiar with RD-stage and have no access to TNM information necessary for RD stage.

The readers may not understand if the conclusions tell that RD stage may substitute for AJCC in the other countries as well, or simply declare that Australian PBCRs will use RD stage because of information availability.

I hope that the manuscript contributes to the researchers and the tumor registrars in the world to develop their cancer registries. Please explain more about RD-stage in terms of staging procedure and workload compared with AJCC-TNM. The readers may expect the authors to mention the Essential TNM, one of the simplified staging system, as well. Could you develop the discussion in a more "worldwide" way?
Most of the other countries PBCR collects DoS information in the database. The authors mentioned that DoS remained useful for epidemiological studies, by citing several previous studies. We expect to have a little more comments, perspectives or proposition of future update on DoS for these countries.

**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.

Unable to assess

**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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