Reviewer's report

Title: Prognostic factors for survival in patients with malignant pleural effusions. What is considered important for treatment?

Version: 2 Date: 23 October 2014

Reviewer: Lisete Teixeira

Reviewer's report:

1. Major Revisions
The authors need to “rebuild” the paper.
In the Background, the second paragraph (lines 71-72) is almost the same as the first one.
In methods section, paragraph about Potential predictors of survival, the authors described the pleural fluid biochemical characteristics as glucose, LDH, protein levels and cytological and histological results. What means biochemical classification of malignant pleural fluids? Is not the cytological analyses?
The authors described too much in the statistical section. They don’t need to define what p value means (it is classical) ; also don’t need to explain the guidelines. One phrase about, with the references, could be enough.
Results section needs to be very clear. Last paragraph is almost the same of the 4th
Discussion
In the third paragraph (line 234) first phrase needs to be adequate. (an isolated ???, minimal…)
The fourth paragraph could be summarized. The TMN system is not the objective of this study.
The paragraphs 5th and 6th need to be rewritten; they are confused, sometimes is difficult to understand which study they are talking about. (lines 262-284)
Why the authors described again the COX method?? (lines 285-293)
The first line of the 10th paragraph the word also needs to be removed.
In summary a careful revision of the discussion section needs to be done.

2. Minor Essential Revision
The authors need to do a careful correction of spelling and grammatical to avoid several mistakes in all text. Some expressions should be changed, as example: “subject” is commonly used for health people; “patient” is better.
Legend of figure 2 needs to be adequate; ECOG instead of PS (performance status) or explain what PS means in the subtitle. The word Remission is in the top of the figure 2 and means what?? It needs to be described in the subtitle.
Is the figure 1 really necessary? Table 2 clarifies the date. However if the authors keep it in, please add months in the figure – Time (months) Would be easier to see the results if the percentage of each tumor type were in the table 2.

3. Discretionary Revisions
Authors could avoid expressions as “our subjects” when they are talking about patients of the study (line 191-195).

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being published

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

Declaration of competing interests:
'I declare that I have no competing interests'