Reviewer's report

Title: Survival after laparoscopic and open surgery for colon cancer: a comparative, single-institution study

Version: 2
Date: 12 December 2014

Reviewer: Laura Lorenzon

Reviewer's report:

Dear Editor, thank you for your kind invitation to review the manuscript by Cianchi and co-authors.

This is a clear, well written manuscript; however, I suggest to some minor but essential revisions. Specifically:

1. Authors should focus on the stage-to-stage comparison of survivals. The pooled analysis of patients with different Stage of disease is (in my opinion) clearly affected by the higher rate of Stage I patients in the laparoscopic group comparing with open surgery (30.7% vs 15.0%). Furthermore the difference seen in Stage II patients is their true significant result. Stress that, rather than providing a confounding analysis.

2. Provide data regarding side of resections: how many right or left colectomies were performed in each group? The prevalence of one type of resection in a group might bias results.

3. Please express continuous variables presented in Tables as mean, SD (range). According to this, data could be incorporated in future meta-analysis.

4. Clarify the median follow-up and the rate of patients lost at follow-up. Also how the it has been conducted (telephone interviews, other)?

5. Express morbidity using the Clavien-Dindo classification.

6. Possibly, elucidate what kind of statistical analysis has been used for providing p-values in the Table’s footnotes.

Regards,
Laura Lorenzon

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.

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