Reviewer’s report

Title: Identifying risk factors for metastasis to the level VII lymph node in papillary thyroid carcinoma patients

Version: 2 Date: 22 Dec 2019

Reviewer: Thomas J. Fahey

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Page 11, Line 12 - "Failure to include Level VII MAY leave significant ....." Can not state that it will - especially in prophylactic CND dissection.

Page 11, Line 15 - since mediastinal recurrences leading to life-threatening problems due to local Level VII recurrence are exceedingly rare, this sentence must be modified to include a qualifier - such as - "Though these are rare events..."

Page 12, Line 7 - For PTC patients with ultrasonography-positive LNs - consideration could be given to performing a Level VII dissection. It can not be said that it should be done since the overwhelming majority of patients do not have Level VII recurrence and we do not know the long-term implications of having dormant positive lymph nodes in Level VII.

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:

Needs some language corrections before being published

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