Reviewer's report

Title: Fluorescein Sodium-Guided surgery of parotid gland tumors as a technical advance

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Reviewer: Helen Cocks

Reviewer's report:

This paper illustrates the extrapolation of a technique used in neurosurgery to the excision of a tumour in the parotid gland, with the use of intravenous fluorescein and filtered light to aid vision of the tumour.

The technique is interesting but I do not feel the authors show that the technique will have widespread uptake.

The fact that it is a novel idea would to my mind support publication so that it may be assessed by a wider audience.

My specific points are to try and understand why this is sold as a retrospective case note review when it appears that ethical approval has been sought for this new technique and the cohort is so small. I would have thought in this group that data must have been collected in real time for maximum accuracy. Please comment.

Secondly the cohort is 7 patients and in only 2 of these was it thought by the operating surgeon that the fluorescein made a difference to the appearance of the tumour due to the presence in both cases of satellite nodules.

Thirdly only 2 of the cohort had a PSA, most were Warthins tumour which can be well managed with extra capsular dissection. There is no comment as to whether there had been cytological analysis of the tumour pre op. Whilst it would seem that both Warthins and PSA take up fluorescein there is no inclusion of malignant tumours and whether they can be usefully seen with this technique. Please comment.

It would take a huge study to find out whether ultimately this technique made any difference to LRR or OS and in each case it adds some expense and risk to the patient and requires the use of light at a defined frequency.

A cost benefit analysis would be interesting.
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.

Yes

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Not relevant to this manuscript

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