Reviewer’s report

Title: Salivary Gland Function in Nasopharyngeal Carcinoma Before and Late After Intensity-Modulated Radiotherapy Evaluated by Dynamic Diffusion-Weighted MR Imaging with Gustatory Stimulation

Version: 0 Date: 22 Sep 2019

Reviewer: Amanda Phoon Nguyen

Reviewer's report:

Dear authors, thank you for submitting this paper.

However, I have not recommended it for publication due to some flaws in the methodology and I am uncertain of its overall clinical application.

In order for it to be a manful addition to the literature, my suggestions for improvement are as follows:

1. The patient characteristics need to be reported. In table form, each patient's age, the dose of the IMRT, chemo details, and factors relevant to salivary gland hypofunction should be included.

2. Instead of lemon juice, have you considered the use of a saliva test kit? Why or why not?

3. I have difficulty understanding the clinical utility and the aim of the paper. I don't think the conclusion is supported, which is that DW-MRI with transient gustatory stimulation could be used to evaluate salivary gland hypofunction. Could you please expand on how this may be used clinically?

4. A distinction should be drawn between xerostomia and salivary gland hypofunction; these words are not interchangeable.

5. Images may be useful for the readers to follow what is being described.

6. Appropriate controls should be used.

7. Could you please comment on the reproducibility of these tests?

Thank you.
Are the methods appropriate and well described?
If not, please specify what is required in your comments to the authors.

No

Does the work include the necessary controls?
If not, please specify which controls are required in your comments to the authors.

No

Are the conclusions drawn adequately supported by the data shown?
If not, please explain in your comments to the authors.

No

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

Declaration of competing interests
Please complete a declaration of competing interests, considering the following questions:

1. Have you in the past five years received reimbursements, fees, funding, or salary from an organisation that may in any way gain or lose financially from the publication of this manuscript, either now or in the future?

2. Do you hold any stocks or shares in an organisation that may in any way gain or lose financially from the publication of this manuscript, either now or in the future?

3. Do you hold or are you currently applying for any patents relating to the content of the manuscript?

4. Have you received reimbursements, fees, funding, or salary from an organization that holds or has applied for patents relating to the content of the manuscript?

5. Do you have any other financial competing interests?

6. Do you have any non-financial competing interests in relation to this paper?

If you can answer no to all of the above, write 'I declare that I have no competing interests' below. If your reply is yes to any, please give details below.
I declare I have no competing interests.

I agree to the open peer review policy of the journal. I understand that my name will be included on my report to the authors and, if the manuscript is accepted for publication, my named report including any attachments I upload will be posted on the website along with the authors' responses. I agree for my report to be made available under an Open Access Creative Commons CC-BY license (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/). I understand that any comments which I do not wish to be included in my named report can be included as confidential comments to the editors, which will not be published.

I agree to the open peer review policy of the journal