Reviewer’s report

Title: Overexpression of miR-21-5p as a predictive marker for complete tumor regression to neoadjuvant chemoradiotherapy in rectal cancer patients

Version: 2 Date: 22 October 2014

Reviewer: Pedro Borralho

Reviewer’s report:

The authors have responded to most of the points raised by the reviewers. Overall, the additional experiments performed strengthen the current manuscript.

Regarding the protein expression of STAB1, despite the technical challenges of lack of available tissue and the antibodies not working in FFPE sections, the authors could have easily evaluated SATB1 protein expression in their in vitro studies as an alternative. This is not the focus of the manuscript, but would make the argument stronger regarding the role of STAB1 in this context.

I am not sure why colon cancer cell lines were chosen for in vitro studies in detriment of rectal cancer cell lines, probably due to ease of access. Still, the experiments performed are sound and bring added value to the manuscript.

In addition to the changes already made to the manuscript, the authors should also address the following (minor essential revisions):

1- The legend of figure 5 should indicate what is being analysed. The same holds true for the text on page 16. (mRNA expression, qPCR).

2- Font for x axis labels is not uniform in all panels of figure 5.

3- Typo on page 10: "miScrpit"

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

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