Reviewer’s report

Title: Choice of relative or cause-specific approach to cancer survival analysis impacts estimates differentially by cancer type, population, and application: evidence from a Canadian population based cohort study

Version: 0 Date: 16 Jan 2017

Reviewer: Diana Sarfati

Reviewer's report:

Thank you for asking me to review this interesting paper. It is well written, logical and useful. I have only minor comments and questions as follows:

* Cancer consequent deaths are those that would be difficult to categorise as being due to cancer, even if full information was known. Pneumonia directly due to cancer treatment would (or should) be defined as a cancer-related death. A better example of a cancer consequent death might be a suicide following a diagnosis of cancer.

* I'm not sure that I agree that the accumulation of evidence relating to the lack of efficacy of PSA testing has resulted in a reduction in PSA testing. This is certainly not the case in many countries.

* Is there any evidence that those who die from other causes have higher survival from prostate cancer than others? What would be the mechanism for this (especially given that generally those with comorbidity have lower survival)?

* I found Fig 1 difficult to read. I would prefer that information presented in a Table format.
**Level of interest**
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An article of importance in its field

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Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

Acceptable

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