Reviewer’s report

Title: EMOTIONAL IMPACT ON THE RESULTS OF BRCA1 AND BRCA2 GENETIC TEST: AN OBSERVATIONAL RETROSPECTIVE STUDY

Version: 0 Date: 27 Jul 2017

Reviewer: Katherine Agre

Reviewer's report:

The paper by Mella et al. reports an interesting study about the emotional impact of BRCA1/2 results. I have a couple of remarks to the authors:

- While reading the paper, many questions were brought up regarding who the participants in this study were. It was unclear to me why the emotional states reported for these women were not correlated with their genetic testing results. The methods state that the participants are women (both those affected and unaffected with cancer) who underwent genetic testing. There is no mentioned of what the results were (positive, negative, uncertain), which in previous study has been demonstrated to significantly affect emotional state post-testing. Additionally, was this testing solely for BRCA1 and BRCA2? Or were other genes included on the testing? The methods left more questions than answers, specifically, with what type of information the participants received pre- and post-testing regarding their results and who the participants were.

- It is also difficult to make assumptions on this population given that a pre-test survey regarding emotional state was not collected. Many non-probands attending genetic counseling for family history of cancer are extremely anxious and comparing the pre-test or post-test emotional states would have provided a better baseline.

- Additionally, information is not given of whether these were consecutive patients seen in a clinic for genetic testing, there could be inherent biases in the study population of 91 women of those who were recruited.

- Table 1 was very hard to understand, especially since the N did not add up to the 91 participants.

While I appreciate the study's tools and procedure, the presentation of this data was extremely hard to follow and unconvincing. Only one survey was conducted 1 month after receiving results, yet the introduction of the paper cites the need for longer follow-up studies. It is also difficult to draw conclusions from a sample size of 91. In sum, I applaud your efforts to address this important topic, but I had many concerns regarding who you were surveying and the communication of this data.
Level of interest
Please indicate how interesting you found the manuscript:

An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

Quality of written English
Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

Not suitable for publication unless extensively edited

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 that 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