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**Manuscript NO: 40417**

**Title:** Risk of lymph node metastases in patients with T1b oesophageal adenocarcinoma – a retrospective single centre experience

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Dear Professor Professor Xiang Li,

Thank you for considering the above manuscript in your reputable journal. We have addressed all the areas in your recent email and hope these will now allow the paper to be reviewed.

In terms of ethical review, this was not obtained. However, as head of the department this work was undertaken as a retrospective audit of patient care as part of service evaluation under the authorization of our local audit and governance guidelines. As the findings were deemed to be of significant scientific interest and vital to shape clinical care and practise it was felt appropriate to publish and present these as a retrospective audit.

I hope this letter will provide sufficient support for the study to be considered in your journal.

Yours sincerely,



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