

## Step 2: Key points of revising the manuscript

(1) Scientific quality: Please resolve all issues in the manuscript based on the peer review report and make a point-to-point response to the issues raised in the peer review report.

**- A point-by-point response has been provided below with all issues addressed as per the peer review report.**

(2) Language quality: Please resolve all language issues in the manuscript based on the peer review report. Please be sure to have a native-English speaker edit the manuscript for grammar, sentence structure, word usage, spelling, capitalization, punctuation, format, and general readability, so that the manuscript's language will meet our direct publishing needs.

**- The manuscript has been revised for grammar, sentence structure, and readability in the latest version.**

(3) Special requirements for figures: Figures must be presented in the order that they appear in the main text of the manuscript (numbered as 1, 2, 3, etc.). The requirements for the figures and figure legends include: (A) All submitted figures, including the text contained within the figures, must be editable. Please provide the text in your figure(s) in text boxes; (B) For line drawings that were automatically generated with software, please provide the labels/values of the ordinate and abscissa in text boxes; (C) Please prepare and arrange the figures using PowerPoint to ensure that all graphs or text portions can be reprocessed by the editor; and (D) In consideration of color-blind readers, please avoid using red and green for contrast in vector graphics or images.

**- Requirements for Figures have been followed.**

(4) Special requirements for tables: Tables must be presented in the order that they appear in the main text of the manuscript (numbered as 1, 2, 3, etc.). Please verify that the tables are referred to in the text by their respective Roman numerals and that the numbering order is correct, and format the tables. Please verify that there are no missing or multiple spaces in the text and tables, e.g. before or after parentheses, between words, or before or after symbols like +, ×, ±, <, >, ≥, and ≤. Please verify that the special words or letters in the text and tables are correct, e.g. P (uppercase), n (lowercase), via, vs (lowercase, no punctuation), in vivo, in vitro, and et al (no punctuation) are italicized.

**- Requirements for Tables have been followed.**

(5) Special requirements for references: Please provide the PubMed numbers and DOI citation numbers to the reference list and list all authors of the references. Please revise throughout. The author should provide the first page of the paper without PMID and DOI numbers. NOTE: The PMID is required, and NOT the PMCID; the PMID number can be found at <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov>. (Please begin with PMID:) The DOI number can be found at <http://www.crossref.org/SimpleTextQuery/>. (Please begin with DOI: 10.\*\*).

**- All PMID and DOIs have now been updated for references, when available.**

Please verify that the references are cited by Arabic numerals in square brackets and superscripted in the text, and that the numbering order is correct. There should be no space between the bracket and the preceding word or the following punctuation. When references in the text and tables are cited with author name(s), it is necessary to manually verify that the name(s) is consistent with the first author's surname in the corresponding reference list.

(6) Special requirements for article highlights: If your manuscript is an original study (basic study or clinical study), meta-analysis, systemic review, the “article highlights” section should be provided. Detailed writing requirements for “article highlights” can be found in the Guidelines and Requirements for Manuscript Revision.

**- Article Highlights has now been included.**

(7) Ethical documents: Please double check the accuracy of all ethical documents and verify the completeness of the documents according to the type of manuscript.

**- N/A**

(8) Approved grant application form(s) or funding agency copy of any approval document(s): If your manuscript has supportive foundations, the approved grant application form(s) or funding agency copy of any approval document(s) must be provided.

**- N/A**

Step 3: Manuscript revision deadline

We request that you submit your revision in no more than 14 days.

Step 4: Verify the accuracy of general information for your manuscript

Name of journal: World Journal of Gastrointestinal Surgery

Manuscript NO.: 57211

Column: Retrospective Study

Title: Impact of palliative therapies in metastatic esophageal cancer patients not receiving chemotherapy

Authors: Sungjin Kim, Timothy Philip DiPeri, Michelle Guan, Veronica Placencio-Hickok, Haesoo Kim, Jar-Yee Liu, Andrew Hendifar, Samuel Klempner, Ryan Nipp, Alexandra Gangi, Miguel Burch, Kevin Waters, May Cho, Joseph Chao, Katelyn Atkins, Mitchell Kamrava, Richard Tuli and Jun Gong

Corresponding author: Jun Gong, MD, Assistant Professor, Department of Gastrointestinal Malignancies, Cedars-Sinai Samuel Oschin Comprehensive Cancer Institute, 8700 Beverly Blvd, Los Angeles, 90048, United States. Jun.Gong@cshs.org

Received Date: 2020-06-03

First decision: 2020-06-15

## Step 5: Peer-review report(s)

The authors must resolve all issues in the manuscript based on peer-review report(s) and make a point-to point response to the issues raised in the peer-review report(s) which listed below:

### **Reviewer #1:**

Scientific Quality: Grade B (Very good)

Language Quality: Grade A (Priority publishing)

Conclusion: Accept (General priority)

Specific Comments to Authors: The study addresses the impact of palliative treatments in patients with esophageal carcinoma not undergoing chemotherapy. The study is clear, well structured and written. The purpose is well identified. Appropriate methods and statistics. Bibliographical references are adequate. Some clarifications: The concept of palliative treatment is confusing and needs to be expressed more clearly. A palliative treatment by definition cannot modify survival except marginally (but in that case it must be defined as curative, that is, that modifies the natural history of the disease). In this category of patient the main outcome should be the quality of life in its various forms (pain, ability to carry out one's activities, diet by mouth etc). I understand that these outcomes cannot be derived from this patients dataset. Secondly, the words metastatic and advanced are used interchangeably. I don't know if it is possible, but I think it would be important to see if in the dataset it is possible to distinguish the situation of the patient with systemic metastasis from that with locally advanced disease. I think it is two completely different situations, especially when we study the effect of palliative treatments. Otherwise is better to use the expression "metastatic/advanced". Good paper!

- **We thank the reviewer for taking the time to review our manuscript and provide comments and suggestions that we feel overall improve the quality of our paper.**
- **We have made revisions throughout the manuscript to clarify that we are referring to other palliative therapies in patients who did not receive palliative chemotherapy. We have defined palliative therapy in the Methods “as surgery, radiation therapy (RT), and/or other pain management therapy provided to prolong the patient's life by controlling symptoms, to alleviate pain, or to make the patient comfortable.” We do believe that some forms of palliative treatment, i.e., chemotherapy in metastatic esophageal cancer which in its nature is palliative, does significantly and meaningfully improve overall survival. This was one of the reasons for our study to explore if other palliative therapies beyond chemotherapy were associated with improved survival in this population when compared to those who did not receive any form of palliative therapy.**
- **We agree with the reviewer that quality of life would serve a better outcome in this population. Although this evaluation cannot be performed with our current dataset, we believe this to be an important area of future study.**

- **Given that all patients included had M1 disease, we have changed instances of “advanced” to “metastatic” esophageal cancer.**

#### Step 6: Editorial Office’s comments

The author must revise the manuscript according to the Editorial Office’s comments and suggestions, which listed below:

(1) Science Editor: 1 Scientific quality: The manuscript describes a retrospective study of the palliative therapies in metastatic esophageal cancer. The topic is within the scope of the WJGS. (1) Classification: Grade B; (2) Summary of the Peer-Review Report: The study addresses the impact of palliative treatments in patients with esophageal carcinoma not undergoing chemotherapy. The study is clear, well-structured and well-written. The purpose is well identified. Appropriate methods and statistics. However, there are some issues should be addressed. The concept of palliative treatment is confusing and needs to be expressed more clearly. The questions raised by the reviewers should be answered; and (3) Format: There are 2 tables and 1 figure. A total of 34 references are cited, including 11 references published in the last 3 years. There are no self-citations. 2 Language evaluation: Classification: Grade A. 3 Academic norms and rules: The authors provided the Biostatistics Review Certificate, and the signed Conflict-of-Interest Disclosure Form. The authors need to provide the Copyright License Agreement signed by all authors. Institutional Review Board Approval Form and the informed consent were not required. No academic misconduct was found in the CrossCheck detection and Bing search. 4 Supplementary comments: This is an invited manuscript. The study is without financial support. The topic has not previously been published in the WJGS. The corresponding author has not published articles in the BPG. 5 Issues raised: (1) I found no “Author contribution” section. Please provide the author contributions; (2) I found the authors did not provide the original figures. Please provide the original figure documents. Please prepare and arrange the figures using PowerPoint to ensure that all graphs or arrows or text portions can be reprocessed by the editor; (3) I found the authors did not add the PMID and DOI in the reference list. Please provide the PubMed numbers and DOI citation numbers to the reference list and list all authors of the references. Please revise throughout; and (4) I found the authors did not write the “article highlight” section. Please write the “article highlights” section at the end of the main text. 6 Re-Review: Required. 7 Recommendation: Conditionally accepted.

**- We thank the editors for reviewing this manuscript and providing recommendations that enhance the quality of our manuscript.**

**- The confusion regarding the use of the term palliative treatment has been clarified and addressed in the revised manuscript as per our response to Reviewer #1.**

**- We have provided the Copyright License Agreement signed by all authors.**

**- An Author Contribution section has been included.**

**- The original figure has been included.**

**- All PMID and DOIs have been added to the references, when available.**

**- The Article Highlights section has now been included.**

(2) Editorial Office Director: I have checked the comments written by the science editor.

(3) Company Editor-in-Chief: I have reviewed the Peer-Review Report, the full text of the manuscript and the relevant ethics documents, all of which have met the basic publishing requirements, and the manuscript is conditionally accepted with major revisions. I have sent the manuscript to the author(s) for its revision according to the Peer-Review Report and the Criteria for Manuscript Revision by Authors.