

Author's response to the reviewer's comments

Reviewer #1

This study was carried out to evaluate the minimal invasive surgery in elderly esophageal cancer patients compared to younger using metanalysis. This study was very interesting because no randomized trials were included, especially used Newcastle Ottawa quality assessment scale (NOS). But the volume of this manuscript was too large, pleased reduced. In results, please shows in only elderly: Fig2. Changed to 2010~only. Table2-5 might be not necessary. I think that this manuscript might be better by focusing the elderly patients aged 75 years old compared to younger group.

- 1. But the volume of this manuscript was too large, pleased reduced. (...) Table2-5 might be not necessary. I think that this manuscript might be better by focusing the elderly patients aged 75 years old compared to younger group.**

Author's response: Thank you for your valuable comment and we agree that the quality of the manuscript will be increased by focusing only on one age threshold, namely 75 years.

Therefore, we now only report the meta-analysis results of studies using a 75-year age threshold. Other age thresholds remain present in the supplementary with references. The manuscript text and figures were changed accordingly.

Consequently, figures 2, 3 and 4 were removed from the manuscript, because only seven studies were left for meta-analysis. Therefore regarding figure 2, there was no need anymore to present the amount of publications per period of time (figure 2). Also, there was no need anymore to present the amount of publications per age threshold (figure 3), because all references to studies using age thresholds other than 75 years were removed. Finally, since only seven studies were left for meta-analysis, risk of bias was presented in a table according

to the domains of risk of bias in the Newcastle-Ottawa Scale, similarly to supplementary table 9. This table bears the name 'Table 1. Risk of bias per included study for meta-analysis'

2. In results, please shows in only elderly: Fig2. Changed to 2010~only.

Author's response: Thank you for your valuable comment. Due to changes to the manuscript according to your earlier comment on reducing the manuscript's volume, we have decided to remove this figure from the manuscript, because only seven studies were left for meta-analysis so there was no longer need to present the amount of studies per publication period.