

Dear editor,

We are grateful to you for your valuable advice. We have study your comments carefully and have made modifications and corrections which we hope meet your approval.

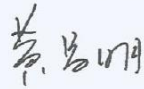
### **3 Biostatistics**

The statistical methods of this study were reviewed by Mi Lin from Fujian Medical University Union Hospital.

If you have any question about this manuscript, please don't hesitate to let me know.

Sincerely yours,

Dr. Chang-Ming Huang

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Chang-Ming Huang' in a stylized cursive script.