

## Answering Reviewers letter

Dear reviewers and editors:

Thank you for your efficient work in procession of our manuscript entitled '**Impact factors of lymph node retrieval and survival in locally advanced rectal cancer with neoadjuvant therapy**' ( Manuscript NO.: 59090). We also really appreciate our dear reviewers for giving us precious advices, which are important for us to improve the quality of our work.

In addition, we have carefully revised our paper based on the comments of reviewers, and the point-to-point responses to the reviewers' comments are presented below:

Reviewer #1:

**Specific Comments to Authors:** While this is a retrospective study, it raises an important issue regarding lymph node retrieval after neoadjuvant therapy, highlighting the need to retrieve a significant number of lymph nodes, even if there are smaller numbers of identifiable and positive lymph nodes in these patients. Statistics and figures seem to be well devised.

**Response 1: It is my great honor to be highly appraised by the reviewer of this study**

**1) Science Editor:** 1 Scientific quality: The manuscript describes a retrospective cohort study of the lymph node retrieval and survival. The topic is within the scope of the WJG. (1) Classification: Grade B; (2) Summary of the Peer-Review Report: While this is a retrospective study, it raises an important issue regarding lymph node retrieval after neoadjuvant therapy, highlighting the need to retrieve a significant number of lymph nodes, even if there are smaller numbers of identifiable and positive lymph nodes in these patients. Statistics and figures seem to be well devised; and (3) Format: There are 4 tables and 1 figure. A total of 39 references are cited, including 9 references published in the last 3 years. There are no self-citations. 2 Language evaluation: Classification: Grade B. A language editing certificate issued by AJE was provided. 3 Academic norms and rules: The authors provided the Institutional Review Board Approval Form and informed consent. The authors need to provide the Biostatistics Review Certificate, the signed Conflict-of-Interest Disclosure Form and Copyright License Agreement, and fill out the STROBE checklist with page numbers. No academic misconduct was found in the Bing search. The highest single-source similarity index in the CrossCheck report showed to be 10%. According to our policy, the overall similarity index should be less than 30%, and the single-source similarity should be less than 5%. Please rephrase these repeated sentences. 4 Supplementary comments: This is an unsolicited manuscript. The study was supported by National Key Research and Development Plan "Research on Prevention and Control of Major Chronic Non-Communicable Diseases"; and the Medicine and Health Technology Innovation Project of Chinese Academy of Medical Sciences. The topic has not previously been published in the WJG. The corresponding author has

published 5 articles in the BPG. 5 Issues raised: (1) I found the authors did not provide the approved grant application form(s). Please upload the approved grant application form(s) or funding agency copy of any approval document(s); and (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. 6 Re-Review: Required. 7 Recommendation: Conditionally accepted.

**Response2: We have completed the above deficiencies as required**

**2) Editorial Office Director:** I have checked the comments written by the science editor. The highest single-source similarity index in the CrossCheck report showed to be 10%, please rephrase these repeated sentences to be 5%.

**Response3: We have completed the above deficiencies as required**

With kind regards,

Yours sincerely