

Our responses to reviewer's comments

Ms_JCTI_33006

The pathological stage at diagnosis of breast cancer in Ghanaian women: a retrospective study at the Korle-Bu Teaching Hospital Accra (2001 to 2014).

PART 1

1. The authors used AJCC 6th for pathological staging. Currently we use AJCC 7th which will limit the study findings and I would suggest adding this as study limitation

Response:

This has been taken care of in the main document.

2. In Discussion part it is thoroughly discussed about pathological stage and correlation with overall survival. Of note, the authors do not mention any information about their patients' survival. Was wondering if there is any data about survival?

Response

There is no national population-based cancer registry in Ghana and no data on survival of breast cancer patients.

3. A 57.4% of patients were found to have high pathological stage Breast Ca. I appreciated the fact that authors discussed the details about late presentation of patients to clinical center after appearance of breast mass. I will recommend to add some information about screening mammogram in Ghana.

Response

Breast cancer screening is not well organised in Ghana. Currently efforts are being made to initial screening at various health centres/levels. However, individual women, churches and some academic institutions regularly carry-out screening of their workers. Furthermore, breast self-examination and breast cancer awareness campaigns are currently being recommended.

4. Recommend to write median age at diagnosis not mean.

Response

This is done as indicated in the result section (52.0 years).

5. Women less than 40 years present only 17% of the study and there is only 3 % difference between Stage I, II and III and IV. I would not recommend concluding that younger patients tend to have higher pathological stage at diagnosis.

Response

Accepted

6. Skin involvement is common in Stage IV breast cancer 26%.

Response

This is corrected in the main document

7. Please review word choice in MS.

Response

Attempts have been made in this regard.

PART 2:

1. Are there ethical issues in this manuscript?

Response: No ethical issues