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CORRESPONDENCE

Response to M. Brehmer: Register-based research. Accurate data and analysis, crucial for correct conclusions. Comment on 'Incidence, mortality, and relative survival of patients with cancer of the bladder and upper urothelial tract in the Nordic countries between 1990 and 2019'

Eemil Karttunen[a], Jan Oldenburg[b], Steinar Thoresen[c] and Anders Ullén[d]

[a]Merck OY, an affiliate of Merck KGaA, Espoo, Finland; [b]Department of Oncology, Akershus University Hospital, Oslo, Norway; [c]Merck AB NUF, an affiliate of Merck KGaA, Oslo, Norway; [d]Department of Oncology, Karolinska University Hospital, Solna, Sweden

To the Editor,

We thank Dr Brehmer for thoughtful reflections on our recent article [1–4]. We would like to make some comments to her editorial.

Firstly, it is stated that our article lacks the required data in order to understand the potential impact of new treatment options for urothelial cancer. We consider our study to be a baseline to enable future comparisons between treatment paradigms and to describe the current general situation of urothelial cancer in the Nordic countries in terms of the epidemiologic endpoints. We argue that our results that showed stable incidence, increased relative survival and declining mortality over time in the Nordic countries facilitate such comparisons. We believe that these results may be due to improvements in diagnostic work-up and treatment between 1990 and 2019.

Secondly, an admitted limitation of our study is the lack of data on tumour stage and grade in the NORDCAN database. Therefore, we have not attempted to quantify the impact of newly introduced treatments on mortality or survival. As pointed out by Brehmer, more granulated data are needed to draw firm conclusions regarding the effect of novel treatments. One way to create such a resource is to use and merge national clinical cancer registers, which contain highly granulated data [5, 6].

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ORCID

Eemil Karttunen https://orcid.org/0009-0007-2013-5171

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CONTACT Eemil Karttunen Eemil.karttunen@merckgroup.com Merck OY, Keilaranta 6, 02150 Espoo, Finland, an affiliate of Merck KGaA