Reviewer's report

Title: Meta-analysis of radiofrequency ablation versus hepatic resection for small hepatocellular carcinoma

Version: 2 Date: 17 April 2010

Reviewer: Linda M Wong

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Minor Essential Revisions
1. Table 2: "motality" should be "mortality"
2. Abstract: First sentence, ".....better therapy (HR vs RFA) to small hepatocellular cancer", should probably change "to" to "for"
3. Authors should make a comment as to whether the studies included in this meta-analysis mentioned if recurrences were treated with salvage liver transplant. This could make a particular difference in the tumors <3 cm, as more of these would be likely to qualify for transplant with Milan Criteria.
4. Abstract: Conclusions: "For tumors <3 cm HR did not differ significantly from RFA for survival as reported in three NRCTs". Are these patients with single tumors <3 cm or would this include patients with any tumor < 3cm? Same issue with table 3 -- this is single tumor < 3 cm.
5. You do make the comment that RFA patients were more likely to have less favourable characteristics such as multiple nodules in the discussion, however do the studies give you any insight on the value of HR vs RFA for single vs multiple tumors? You may want to comment on this as well.

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.