Reviewer's report

Title: Advanced Biliary Tract Carcinomas: A Retrospective Multicenter Analysis of First and Second-line Chemotherapy

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Reviewer: Minsig Choi

Reviewer's report:

Fiteni et al. reviewed 64 patients with advanced biliary tract carcinomas as a retrospective multicenter analysis in first and second-line setting. The aim of the study was to assess the efficacy and safety of different platinum-based chemotherapies administered as first line in patients with aBTC. Although this is not a randomized clinical trial, the clinical results in a rare disease like aBTC has a merit to be published. However in a retrospective like this, it can not make any conclusion about the hypothesis rather the clinical results are generally hypothesis generating.

1. statistics section should be simplified to show primary and secondary end-points. I would remove the univariate and multivariate analysis of the other factors in this setting (N=64) with two different chemotherapy and 5 different variables. Such analysis does not have any merit in this setting.

2. results section

Showing survival data in the two groups and safety data are presented nicely but i would remove the univariate and multivariate analysis section.

3. safety

since this is a retrospective study; would elucidate how the safety information is collected; medical chart review or electronic data capture.

4. discussion

as authors eluded in the introduction, the standard of care for fit patients in this setting is gem+cis; so discussion should focus on why gem+ox was used in the institution and what are comparable difference in the two regimen.

Evidence based approach should recommend Gem+cis and the arguments of the authors insisting GEMOX based on a retrospective study is not very compelling.

Authors mention 16 patients with poor PS; the clinical outcome on these patients would be helpful to argue in favor or GEMOX or safety profile of GEMOX can be compared to the ABC study.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field
Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being published

Statistical review: Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.

Declaration of competing interests:
I have no competing interests’