Reviewer's report

Title: Efficacy and safety of bevacizumab in elderly patients with metastatic colorectal cancer: results from the Czech population-based registry

Version: 1 Date: 23 December 2013

Reviewer: Timothy Price

Reviewer's report:

This is a well written and clear paper assessing bevacizumab effect and age. The registry and management in centralised institutions is an interesting scenario. The equivalent survivals are also of interest. But there are limitations

The major issues are

1. The retrospective nature makes the number difficult and selection bias likely to be very high. Only 4% of patients are over 75 years and this suggests a highly selected group. A discussion of what these numbers mean for Czech patients is important. ie do the authors have a feel for what proportion of patients actually receive Bev overall, and in particular what proportion of those >75 years. The conclusions should at least point out that these results almost certainly relate to a very select elderly group

2. There is a need to understand who enters the data, ie is it clinicians or data managers. This will help understand the accuracy of some of the data during a retrospective case review.

3. The survivals are interesting but for a population based registry, an understanding of what other data is available for Czech survivals for mCRC to put these in perspective

4. In the discussion there is mention of the majority of patients being <65 years, but I think the median in general is around this figure, and certainly in population studies in some countries over 65yrs.

Minor

1. In the discussion I'm not sure I agree that this is data is "real world" as it suggests. The patients are selected and are also treated in a centralised b=nature, something that is not common in other countries.

2. The results of GI perfs doesn't give the age breakdown in the text.

3. Reference to BRITE as a study is incorrect, it was a prospective registry in my mind.4. As above, in the conclusion it should be noted that this data suggests that "for a selected elderly group" Bev appears safe and probably as effective"

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.

Declaration of competing interests:

Uncompensated member of Roche Advisory Board