Reviewer's report

Title: Systematic Review of topotecan (Hycamtin) in relapsed small cell lung cancer

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Reviewer: Lucio Crinò

Reviewer's report:

This is a well written systematic review on topotecan as second line treatment in SCLC after failure of first line treatment.

Second line therapy in SCLC, is a poorly studied and difficult topic, with few randomised studies and small data on comparator arms such as best supportive care. This review has been designed with a clear and rigorous methodology selecting just seven trials in which however, heterogeneity in patient’s selection and drugs doses make the conclusions poorly comparable. Despite these considerations and the objective lack of experience, the research has been performed with a careful design and all the conclusive statements seem to be at the same time equilibrate and consistent with the actual clinical evidence. In summary, I think that this review can be very useful from a clinical point of view, and it deserves publication on BMC Cancer.

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:

'I declare that I have no competing interests'