Reviewer’s report

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

Version: 2 Date: 18 May 2010

Reviewer: Yee C Ung

Reviewer’s report:

The authors present a thorough review and analysis on a narrow subject. One always has concerns about bias when the sponsor of the manuscript is also the producer of the drug in question. None the less, the authors have made a statement regarding any potential conflict of interest.

The evidence for the use of topotecan is limited but the best evidence for its use is in the OBrien study evaluating oral topotencan and BSC vs BSC alone with a survival benefit in favor or topotecan.

The other major premise is the ability to do an indirect comparison when no direct comparison trial is available providing the trials comprise comparable patient characteristics. The authors have provided some justification and comparisons to validate their argument. Ideally a direct comparisons trial would be better but for this patient population, its unlikely to happen.

The conclusions given the limitations of the available data are appropriate.

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.