Reviewer’s report

Title: Is there a role for the quantification of RRM1 and ERCC1 expression in Pancreatic Ductal Adenocarcinoma?

Version: 1 Date: 30 October 2011

Reviewer: Amir sonnenblick

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Major revision:

The authors state that mRNA samples for ERCC1 and RRM1 were classified as “Low” or “High” expression according to cut off values pre-established by Response Genetics [21]. However in Manuel Cobo study [21] only ERCC1 levels were evaluated and the tumors were form NSCLC origin. In Cobo study around 55% tumors were classified as "low" while in the present study almost 70%. This problem is clearly stated by the authors in the discussion (“ Other sources of variability could be related to the cut off values used for PCR detection ….”) while no solution was done to solve it. Perhaps "linear regression” or dichotomizing as high or low at the median ("as was done in the pioneering studies in lung) would address this problem.

Minor revision:

The Final results of the randomized, prospective, multicenter phase III trial of adjuvant chemotherapy with gemcitabine versus observation (Conko-001) suggest that gemzar significantly improves median OS [G:22.8m, O: 20.2m, p=0.005]. In the present manuscript the median survival of the entire cohort was 18 months which is less than the observation arm of Conko-001. This fact demonstrate the limitations of the present retrospective analysis and while cannot be resolved it should be mentioned in the text.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests.