Reviewer’s report

Title: IMRT and carbon ion boost for malignant salivary gland tumors: interim analysis of the COSMIC trial

Version: 1 Date: 6 March 2012

Reviewer: Robert Semrau

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The manuscript reports first toxicity and efficacy results of combined IMRT and carbon ion boost for inoperable or incomplete or marginally resected adenoid cystic carcinomas and other malignant salivary gland tumors. The question of the trial is important and follows the aim to set up clinical trials of carbon ion radiotherapy to collect clinical data for cancer types that will potentially benefit from heavy ion therapy.

The methods are mostly well described, patient selection is clearly shown. Toxicity results are thoroughly reported. However, frequency of toxicity analysis during treatment is not described and needs to be added.

Minor changes in English writing should be considered

• Page 7: :” should not exceed 5045” – please clarify.
• Discussion: “particle therapy has changed patients outlook in this rare condition”: patient’s prognosis seems more appropriate
• The term “complete resection” in the manuscript is misleading when also used for R1-resected patients. Please clarify.
• Page 15: “profit from combined treatment”, benefit seems more appropriate

The work is suitable for publication

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

Declaration of competing interests:

no competing interests