Reviewer's report

Title: Progression-free survival at 2 years is a reliable surrogate marker for the 5-year overall survival rate in patients with locally advanced Non-Small cell lung cancer treated with chemoradiotherapy.

Version: 1 Date: 3 October 2013

Reviewer: hecheng li

Reviewer's report:

Major compulsory revisions,

1. The present study provide evidence with low level. Since 159 patients with advanced non-small cell lung cancer were enrolled in more than seven years, the quality control of this study is not good. The chemo-regimens in this study were heterogeneous and some regimens were not internationally standard. Generally speaking, the 5-year overall survival for stageIIIA patients after treatment is no more than 30%, but in the current study for more advanced patients the 5-year OS was more than 40%. This controversial OS might be due to the poor quality of the database.

2. A meta-analysis of 2334 patients with advanced non-small cell lung cancer from 5 randomized trials has been published very recently (Silvy Laporte, et al. BMJ Open2013 3;). The analyses provides only modest support for considering PFS as an acceptable surrogate for OS in patients with advanced NSCLC. Only treatments that have a major impact on PFS (risk reduction of at least 50%) would be expected to also have a significant effect on OS.

3. The authors intend to analyze whether 24 months PFS could be a surrogate for 5-year OS, but they did not apply landmark analysis properly. The authors only did provide some descriptive analysis but no testing at all.

Minor Essential Revisions

1. In paragraph 1 (Introduction), "In the 1990`s...... was not insufficient" is beyond understanding.

2. The subtitle acknowledgement is a typo.

Level of interest: An article of limited interest

Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being published

Statistical review: Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.