Reviewer’s report

Title: Chemotherapy for advanced pancreatic cancer: A systematic review and network meta-analysis

Version: 1 Date: 19 March 2014

Reviewer: Antonis Valachis

Reviewer’s report:

This is a network meta-analysis about the efficacy of different chemotherapeutic agents in metastatic pancreatic cancer. The network meta-analysis is nicely done with adequate statistics. However, some issues need changes.

Minor Revisions in Methods:
- The algorithm needs some parentheses to be correct
- Why did the authors exclude randomized phase II trials? Please clarify

Major Revisions in Results
- The meta-analysis has generated many results but the authors should choose the most important results, figures, and tables. There are too many figures and tables and it is difficult for the reader to concentrate on the important results. Some suggestions:
  - Table 3 as supplement
  - Figure 3, 4, 6 as supplement
  - Try to re-write the results more concise.

Minor revisions in Discussion
- Write your results in the first paragraph of the discussion.
- A prior meta-analysis found that patients with performance status 0-1 had benefit from combination whereas patients with worse performance status did not have any benefit. A discussion of this factor (performance status) in the decision is important.


- “Another limitation included the fact that the WinBUGS code does not account for correlation in multi-arm trials, however this was not applicable for this particular analysis as no 3-arm trials were included in the study”. There is no need to write a limitation of statistical package if it is not applicable for this study. The authors can remove this sentence.

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely
related research interests

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.

Declaration of competing interests:
'I declare that I have no competing interests