Reviewer’s report

Title: Pemetrexed for advanced non-small cell lung cancer patients with interstitial lung disease

Version: 1 Date: 23 March 2014

Reviewer: Francesco Grossi

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The study by Kato M et. has evaluated retrospectively the role of pemetrexed in patients with advanced NSCLC and interstitial lung disease. The evaluation of a chemotherapeutic agent in terms of efficacy and safety in ILD patients is certainly original. However, the number of patients included in this analysis is too small to draw any final conclusion.

Minor essential revisions

1. Introduction. I suggest to report the data about the ILD induced by EGFR TKIs specially in Asian population.

2. Introduction. It could be of interest to report the incidence of ILD in Asian compared to Caucasian population and its relation with the antiblastic agents.

3. Pulmonary toxicity. It is important to define the pulmonary toxicity in particular which pulmonary toxicity and which grade because in the CTCAE there are many pulmonary toxicity with different impact on the quality of life of the patients.

4. The use of pemetrexed in this retrospective analysis is from second-line. For this reason the population is too heterogeneous with different risk of ILD induced by previous treatments. A medium/high percentage of patients received probably an EGFR TKI in first (mutated patients) or in second/third-line (wild-type patients), these information should be taken into account in the interpretation of the results and discussed in the article.

5. Every statistical consideration is biased by the small number of patients included in this study and every conclusion should be taken with caution.

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.