Reviewer’s report

Title: Effect and safety of dual anti-HER2 therapy compared to monotherapy in patients with HER2-positive breast cancer: A Systematic Review and Meta-analysis

Version: 3 Date: 3 June 2014

Reviewer: Yu-Hao Zhou

Reviewer’s report:

In this work, Zhang et al. performed a review analysis to compare treatment outcomes of dual anti-HER2 therapy with monotherapy. They compiled several clinical studies to analyze statistically the relative risks for pathologic complete response (pCR), overall survival (OS), progression-free survival (PFS) and safety. They concluded that dual anti-HER2 therapy was benefit in the treatment of HER2-positive breast cancer in both neoadjuvant and metastatic settings, but associated with more frequent adverse events.

Minor Essential Revisions:

1. The manuscript needs deep language corrections before being published.
2. The following sentence was not suitable: “The search was limited to randomised clinical trials but without publication status (published, unpublished, in press, and in progress) and language restrictions” (line 6-7, “Material and Methods” part). In my review, a meta-analysis cannot be carried out with works in progress. How do you get them?
3. It will be much better if the author could explain the heterogeneity of NSABP B-41 study induced. I was confused why this study could lead to so much heterogeneity.
4. The author should add the reference of included studies in table 1.

Overall, this systematic review has been carried out to a high standard involving much work by the authors and should provide a valuable contribution when the problems I have mentioned have been addressed.

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

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

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

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