Reviewer's report

Title: Tamoxifen is not effective in good prognosis patients with hepatocellular carcinoma

Version: 1 Date: 22 May 2006

Reviewer: Florian Eckel

Reviewer's report:

General
Several prospective randomized trials and a systematic review of tamoxifen in patients with advanced HCC have failed to show a survival benefit. 2005 Barbare et al published a negative randomized trial in this setting too. In contrast, in a subgroup analysis a survival benefit in patients with Okuda stage I/II treated was found. However, this was a result of a subgroup analysis, and therefore, as Barbare et al discussed, this findings must be regarded with great caution. The aim of the present study was to validate this findings. However, Gallo et al did the same: A not previously planned subgroup analysis of the negative CLIP trial (published in 1998), which did not show any difference in patients with Okuda stage I/II, as well in patients with CLIP score 0/1, treated with tamoxifen compared to controls.

I beleive, as Gallo et al do, that the story of tamoxifen in HCC has been definitively written. So, the question is, if anyone is waiting for the paper of Gallo et al.

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Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)

None

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Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)

None

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Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

None

What next?: Accept without revision

Level of interest: An article of limited interest

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests.