Reviewer's report

Title: A phase II trial of docetaxel and erlotinib as first-line therapy for elderly patients with androgen-independent prostate cancer

Version: 1 Date: 15 June 2007

Reviewer: Damian Laber

Reviewer's report:

General

-------------------------------------------------------------------

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

It is not clear why the authors chose the current statistical methods. A study like this one should have been powered to demonstrate an improved response rate over the single agent docetaxel, and it is very unlikely to achieve that with only 22 patients. Have they stopped this early or this was the initial sample size planned? More over, an expectation of a null hypothesis of 5% response for first line docetaxel in prostate cancer is not appropriate, since the single agent response rate have been well established between 25-50%.

Based on this small and underpowered study the conclusion seems somehow misleading. It should be that this combination should not be studied any further since it has not meet the minimum criteria of superiority over the single-agent docetaxel.

-------------------------------------------------------------------

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

-------------------------------------------------------------------

Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

-------------------------------------------------------------------

What next?: Unable to decide on acceptance or rejection until the authors have responded to the major compulsory revisions

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