Reviewer's report

Title: Early Noninvasive Ventilation for Acute Respiratory Failure in Immunocompromized Patients: Multicenter Randomized Controlled Trial (IVNIctus)

Version: 2  Date: 19 June 2014

Reviewer: Massimo Antonelli

Reviewer's report:

The protocol is well conceived and designed.

I have few concerns

a) For a correct data collection the FiO2 should be measured. Indeed especially for those patients who will breath through a venturi mask with an high peak flow, the FiO2 delivered through the system might be simply “nominal”. Consequently in order to be sure of having comparable data the FiO2 should be reliably determined and in the present design this is not taken into consideration

b) As patients will receive both HFOT and low flow O2 therapy (< 9 l/min) how will you manage the stratification of the population? Looking at the different characteristic of the delivering systems and effects, the randomization should imply a three arms. The present design is unclear on this aspect

c) What early NIV really means should be better clarified.

Level of interest: An article of outstanding merit and interest in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interest regarding this paper