Reviewer’s report

Title: A dual regimen of ritonavir/darunavir plus dolutegravir for rescue or simplification of rescue therapy: 48 weeks' observational data

Version: 0 Date: 11 Jul 2017

Reviewer: Diego Ripamonti

Reviewer's report:

This is a retrospective, single arm and multicenter study involving 130 patients, who switched their HIV regimen to a dual therapy (DRV+/DTG at different dosages) for different reasons.

Up to 30% of pts with virological failures at baseline, a few switching to a BID regimen (suggesting extensive resistance).

Rationale: high barrier to resistance for this dual regimen (but no randomized trials versus triple regimen are available).

Comments:

Study Objective as well as the primary end point (which is presumably virological) should be written, both in the abstract and in the paper.

Abstract section:

Line 80 "before genotypic tests were available": what does it mean exactly? Therapy was switched before genotype results? If so, was the regimen chosen according to the historical exposure to ARVs? Please specify.

Paper

Line 103: I would write "previously reported study"
Methods section

The methods should include how data were retrospectively collected in different centres: review of clinical charts?, e-data base?

Results section

Overall data are clearly presented

Mean CD4 count level at baseline?(line 168-170)

The first two tables are numbered as "table 1"

I would suggest to evidence, in the table 2, the primary mutations, according to different classes.

Line 190: "of those subjects who had 3-4…." How many patients exactly?

How many pts were previously exposed to integrase before switcing?

Recommendation

Despite being an observational study involving a heterogeneous population, this report adds some evidence (in a significant number of patients) to a common clinical practice, using a dual regimen (with DRV/r plus DTG) as simplification or rescue strategy.

Are the methods appropriate and well described?
If not, please specify what is required in your comments to the authors.

No

Does the work include the necessary controls?
If not, please specify which controls are required in your comments to the authors.

Yes

Are the conclusions drawn adequately supported by the data shown?
If not, please explain in your comments to the authors.

Yes
Are you able to assess any statistics in the manuscript or would you recommend an additional statistical review?
If an additional statistical review is recommended, please specify what aspects require further assessment in your comments to the editors.

Not relevant to this manuscript

**Quality of written English**
Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

Acceptable

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