Reviewer’s report

Title: A randomized phase II study of capecitabine-based chemoradiation with or without bevacizumab in resectable locally advanced rectal cancer: clinical and biological features

Version: 2 Date: 8 July 2014

Reviewer: Vaneja Velenik

Reviewer’s report:

Thank you for opportunity to review this manuscript.

This is a prospective randomized phase II study analysing the efficacy and safety of preoperative radiotherapy combined with capecitabine chemotherapy and bevacizumab in patients with locally advanced rectal cancer. This is a well written and well organized paper demonstrating the tolerability of intensified neoadjuvant treatment. The pCR rate achieved and toxicities seen are in line with the established literature.

There are many studies published with similar treatment protocol, but the strength of this manuscript is based on its randomization and comparison between standard and intensified treatment. Furthermore, the authors searched for biomarkers. I agree with their comment that the association between Ang-2 levels and tumor downstaging should be validated on bigger sample sizes.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests.