Reviewer’s report

Title: Capecitabine in combination with either cisplatin or weekly paclitaxel as a first-line treatment for metastatic esophageal squamous cell carcinoma: a randomized phase II study

Version: 2 Date: 4 May 2015

Reviewer: Tianshu Liu

Reviewer’s report:

This is an interesting paper. The question is well defined by the authors, and the writing is acceptable. However, here are some comments.

Major Compulsory revisions:
1. In page 5 line 14, the author told us all the patients were chemotherapy naïve, but in table 1, which showed 19 patients had prior chemotherapy. Please indicate that.
2. This is a randomized trial, but the author did not tell us how to randomize.

Minor Essential Revisions
1. Although response rates are explained in the manuscript, it will be better to add graphs describing them. Please check the data in page 9 from line 13 to 20, some data were not complied with fig 1., the result of disease control in CC group is wrong which 57% plus 22% equal to 79% #Page 9 line 15#
2. Add some comments like groups median months and P values in the chart of PFS and OS.
3. Why use chest x-ray and chest computed tomography (CT) scan as the baseline evaluation? #Page 6 line 17# Evaluation of Response should use the same method as that in the baseline period. #Page 6 line 22#
4. Why not choose factors like “Prior Chemotherapy” and “LN metastasis” in the analysis of Cox model for PFS and OS, which might be the prognostic factors for PFS and OS.
5. Limitations of the work have not been stated in the manuscript.