Reviewer’s report

Title: Comparative effectiveness of angiotensin-converting enzyme inhibitors and angiotensin II receptor blockers in chemoprevention of hepatocellular carcinoma: A nationwide high-risk cohort study

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Reviewer: Alex Walker

Reviewer’s report:

This manuscript describes a large study aimed at determining the potential chemopreventive properties of antihypertensives in preventing HCC. The study does not find any association, but appears to be well written and well conducted, and thus warrants publication. I have a couple of suggested methodological double checks:

Methods:

Did the authors test the proportional hazards assumption? Looking at the results it seems somewhat unlikely that this would be broken, but always worth checking.

Given the 'negative' finding in the study, it may be worthwhile carrying out a power calculation, to determine the effect size that the study would have needed to observe in order to reach significance.

Things would be a bit clearer if the authors summarised, within a sentence or two, the study design within the first paragraph the methods - i.e. type of study, outcome, brief description of main exposure definition.

Results:

DDD should be defined within tables 2A and B, to avoid the need to search within the text.

Misc comments:

The methods state that the study used an 'encrypted' database, but surely it was only the patient identifiers that were encrypted, so 'pseudonymised' would be a more appropriate word.

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

Yes
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.

I am able to assess the statistics

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

Acceptable

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