**Reviewer’s report**

**Title:** Advantages of using reduced-volume intensity modulated radiation therapy for the treatment of nasopharyngeal carcinoma: a retrospective paired study

**Version:** 1  **Date:** 16 Apr 2019

**Reviewer:** Christoph Süß

**Reviewer’s report:**

The authors present a retrospective study, comparing reduced-volume intensity modulated radiation therapy (RV-IMRT) and conventional-volume intensity modulated radiation therapy (CV-IMRT) for the treatment of nasopharyngeal carcinoma.

The article deals with an interesting topic concerning volume de-escalation in patients with nasopharyngeal carcinoma by using modern radiotherapy techniques.

However, this manuscript has some limitations. Despite those discretionary limitations, in my opinion the article is now suitable for publication in "BMC Cancer".

The authors gave a detailed and comprehensible explanation concerning the occurred and criticised problems, especially the major compulsory revisions 1 and 2. They offer a transparent and understandable argumentation for most of the aspects. For the consisting problems they explain and discuss critically their point of view. Some limitations are still existing for example:

1) "LV-IMRT arm". (Page 6, line 117) Is this a typing error?

2) In this study the tolerability and the toxicity of chemotherapy is not investigated. Which toxicity is associated to chemotherapy? The authors should eliminate the cases with chemotherapy-associated toxicity when indicated because they falsify the comparison of RV-IMRT to CV-IMRT.

**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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