Reviewer’s report

Title: The long-term efficacy of one-shot neoadjuvant intra-arterial chemotherapy combined with radical cystectomy versus radical cystectomy alone for bladder cancer: a propensity-score matching study

Version: 0 Date: 19 Aug 2019

Reviewer: Ardalan Ahmad

Reviewer's report:

This is a retrospective case-control study assessing the efficacy of one-shot neoadjuvant intra-arterial chemotherapy (IAC) combined with radical cystectomy (RC) versus radical cystectomy alone in management of patients with bladder cancer (BCa).

The manuscript needs English language editing.

Comments:
1- While the authors used propensity score matching to account for baseline difference between the 2 cohorts, I am not sure if they used the model appropriately. In fact beside the variables used in the model, the main variable, pathologic and clinical staging characteristics, which will affect OS and CSS were not used. I have major concerns that 2 groups are not appropriately balanced in regard to bladder cancer characteristics. How do we know that NIAC group is similar in disease characteristics to IAC group?
2- The authors should provide information on expertise of the pathologist. Do they have a GU pathologist reviewing the pathology?
3- More information in regard to preoperative findings in both group should be provided: prior intravesical therapy, ... Additionally, please provide information on clinical staging (preoperative) for control group. What was the down staging rate?
4- How was follow up defined? from date of diagnosis?
5- Number of events is quite small for a group of patients with muscle invasive bladder cancer. Only 2 patients in IAC and 11 patients in NIAC died of bladder cancer. This is significantly lower than expected.
6- In line with comment 5, the number of events are too small for the Cox model to be valid and generalizable.
7- Please clearly state objectives of the study in method section.
8- Please spell out abbreviations when used for the 1st time in body of manuscript.
9- Use abbreviations consistently: IAC vs IC
10- Please include 1-, 5- and 10- year survival rates in body of manuscript rather than supplementary material.

Thank you!
Please confirm that you have included your review in the ‘Comments to Author’ box?
As a minimum standard, please include a few sentences that outline what you think are the authors’ hypothesis/objectives, their main results, and the conclusions drawn. Your report should constructively instruct authors on how they can strengthen their paper to the point where it may be acceptable for publication, or provide detailed reasons as to why the manuscript does not fulfill our criteria for consideration. Please supply appropriate evidence using examples from the manuscript to substantiate your comments. Please break your comments into two bulleted or numbered sections: major and minor comments.

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Are you able to assess the statistics?
- Are the statistical test(s) used in this study appropriate and well described?
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- Are the description of any error bars and probability values appropriate?
- Are all error bars defined in the corresponding figure legends?
- Has a sample size calculation been included, or a description and rationale about how sample sizes were chosen?

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