Reviewer's report

Title: The efficacy and safety of Gantong Granules in the treatment of common cold with wind-heat syndrome: study protocol for a randomized controlled trial

Version: 2  Date: 15 February 2015

Reviewer: William CS Cho

Reviewer's report:

This study protocol is well designed, it has followed both the CONSORT statement and SPIRIT statement. Several issues would invite the authors to address as follows:-

Major Compulsory Revisions

1. How is the purity and exact ingredients in the Gantong Granules?

2. The primary outcome is the duration of symptoms, as different degree of severity may exist, how the investigators definitely judge the accurate decision for this issue especially if some patients bear other co-morbidities before the treatments which are not fall in their exclusion criteria?

3. A10-times dilution is used as placebo, did the authors conducted successive dilution before the trial? Did the authors have some more data in supporting this part? What is the minimal dosage of the Gantong Granules which will not have any pharmacological nor clinical effects?

4. In the Discussion, why The previous design of the phase II clinical trial was obsoleted?

5. English needs some edition and improvement.

6. As this study was financially supported by Beikelian Pharmaceutical and Technology Co Ltd, Shenzhen, China, caution should be needed though the sponsor had no role in the study design, data collection, analyses, and decision to submit the manuscript. In this study, a single commercial product is tested with a placebo drug which is also the diluted form of the drug. So, no other conventional treatment arms are available and compare together. Thus, no matter which arms of the study outcome are good and positive, the beneficial party will be the Beikelian Pharmaceutical and Technology Co Ltd.

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being published
**Statistical review:** Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests.