Reviewer’s report

Title: Individual Patient Data Network Meta-Analysis using either Restricted Mean Survival Time Difference or Hazard Ratios: is there a difference? A case study on locoregionally advanced nasopharyngeal carcinomas

Version: 1 Date: 14 Feb 2019

Reviewer: Raphaël Porcher

Reviewer's report:

I thank the authors for their clarifications, and I apologize if my comments were sometimes unclear.

I still have two comments:

1. Acknowledging the handling of competing risks was suboptimal in the discussion is better than nothing, but still suboptimal as compared to using a better approach since it exists. Nevertheless, this is not the central point of the present work.

2. My remark on the figure 1 was more than I have the impression (although this is not clearly. Stated in the legend) that it gives the rmstD and HR for each individual trial comparison (now I get the point, sorry). So it nicely shows how each treatment effect measure relates to the other at the individual trial level, which could be the aim of a meta-epidemiology study, but not of NMA. I would have preferred the same figure with either NMA summary effects or p-scores, because this is more directed at investigating how much results are affected by the use of rmstD instead of HR in an NMA, and not to describe the treatment effect in an individual trial, which—as underlined by the other reviewer—has already been studied elsewhere.

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