



The Royal College of Pathologists

NICE Single Technology Appraisal (STA) - Cetuximab for the treatment of head and neck cancer

Comments on Appraisal Consultation Document (ACD)

As far as can be judged from the information provided in the Evaluation Report and a recent Mini Review on the subject (Reuter et al British Journal of Cancer 2007;96:408-416) all of the relevant evidence appears to have been taken into account by the Appraisal Committee to provide its provisional recommendations for the preparation of the guidance to the NHS. The ACD points out that the success of cetuximab plus radiotherapy over radiotherapy alone recorded by a single randomised clinical trial (RCT) is not appropriate to recommend extrapolation of its use for patients otherwise eligible for chemoradiotherapy, which is the current standard care. To cover this weakness the Committee has recommended conduction of “head-to-head trials of cetuximab in combination with radiotherapy versus chemoradiotherapy” to allow a more objective assessment of the benefit of cetuximab plus radiotherapy as a novel therapy for head and neck cancer. This message is echoed by the Minireview.

