Indirect comparison of temsirolimus vs rituximab in relapsed or refractory mantle cell lymphoma (E-letter)
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Figure 1. Network meta-analysis: comparisons between temsirolimus, rituximab maintenance and standard treatment in patients with relapsed or refractory mantle cell lymphoma (clinical end-point = freedom from progression with progression defined as loss of durable response in the rituximab trial). The graph shows two direct comparisons (solid line) and one indirect comparison (dotted line). Superiority is found in the two direct comparisons, as well as in the indirect head-to-head comparison between temsirolimus and rituximab. In the direct comparison involving rituximab, the values of HR (0.86; 95% confidence interval: 0.74 to 0.99) were estimated from Figure 3 of ref.3 according to the equations published by Tierney et al. (2007*). One limitation of this analysis is that the three hazard ratios reported in the graph did not differentiate between absence of progression (under and after treatment with temsirolimus) and loss of durable response (under rituximab treatment); however, the approximation whereby these two clinical end-points were pooled into a single category of favourable outcomes is, in our view, acceptable considering the relapsed or refractory disease condition of these patients at enrolment. Statistical calculations of network meta-analysis were carried out using the ITC software (Ottawa, 2009**); graph plotted as described by Fadda et al. (eBMJ, 2011***).

Symbols:

More effective
Less effective
No difference
RCT
Indirect comparison
"t" in cases of no difference
"t" indicates which treatment is favoured by a trend.

* Available from: http://www.trialsjournal.com/content/8/1/16 .
*** Available from http://www.bmj.com/content/342/bmj.c7086.abstract/reply#bmj_el_250448