

To the Editor of World Journal of Hepatology

Manuscript No. 18559

We thank the reviewers for their comments and suggestions, which most certainly improve our manuscript.

A point-by-point reply to the reviewers' comments follows:

Reviewer 00012386

The manuscript has been corrected and proof-read by a native English speaker.

Reviewer 02860614

As it's mentioned in the article that "In addition, it cannot be excluded that some inmates may have lied regarding certain questions, in particular those concerning IVDU and sexual behavior". Can you suggest something to reduce this from happening in order to improve the future researches.

We have explained more extensively this concept and have given some suggestions (page 8, line 7)

Reviewer 00503536

No question

Reviewer 00012216

Zampino R. et al carry out a comprehensive review about the current knowledge on HCV infection in incarcerated populations. The review is well structured and easy to read, giving information about epidemiology, clinical outcome and treatment. The only possible issue with this review is the novelty, since several papers have been published in the last 5 years on the same topic and this could affect the readers' interest. Moreover they give some advice on how to deal with this issue, but could be interesting to cite the origin of these recommendations and the grade of evidence, otherwise should be only considered as opinions. Here below some of the recent reviews are displayed. The novelty of Zampino's review is based on the role of new DAA in treatment of incarcerated patients. BMC Infect Dis. 2014;14 Suppl 6:S17. doi: 10.1186/1471-

2334-14-S6-S17. Epub 2014 Sep 19. *Hepatitis C in European prisons: a call for an evidence-informed response.* Arain A, Robaeys G, Støver H. *Clin Infect Dis.* 2013 Aug;57 Suppl 2:S70-4. doi: 10.1093/cid/cit265. *Enhancing assessment and treatment of hepatitis C in the custodial setting.* Post JJ, Arain A, Lloyd AR. *Top Antivir Med.* 2013 Feb-Mar;21(1):27-35. *Impact of new therapeutics for hepatitis C virus infection in incarcerated populations.* Spaulding AS, Kim AY, Harzke AJ, Sullivan JC, Linas BP, Brewer A, Dickert J, McGovern BH, Strick LB, Trestman R, Ferguson WJ. *Hepatology.* 2013 Oct;58(4):1215-24. doi: 10.1002/hep.26387. Epub 2013 Aug 6. *Incidence and prevalence of hepatitis C in prisons and other closed settings: results of a systematic review and meta-analysis.* Larney S, Kopinski H, Beckwith CG, Zaller ND, Jarlais DD, Hagan H, Rich JD, van den Bergh BJ, Degenhardt L. *Expert Rev Gastroenterol Hepatol.* 2010 Jun;4(3):355-64. doi: 10.1586/egh.10.26. *Chronic hepatitis C in the state prison system: insights into the problems and possible solutions.* Imperial JC.

We appreciate the reviewer's comments and have inserted in the paragraph "Practical advice" some references to support the suggestions given.

Reviewer 02528525

-There is no methods in this work. Authors have to insert methods in the abstract as well as in the paper

We have added in the abstract (line1) and in the text (page 6, last paragraph) the method used to select the references

Reviewer 00005208

No question

Reviewer 00013513

The paper pinpoint a problematic concept quite marginalized in the field of infectious disease that is the prophylaxis of main transmitted infections in some special conditions as incarceration institutes, and could be extended to other infections as HIV, HBV or generally, parentally and

sexually transmitted infections. However, it is judicious to deal carefully with the idea, because usually, it involves political, strategic, financial and social components and depends on varying parameters from a country to another.

The authors agree that many other infections have a great social importance particularly in prisoners, but the aim of this review was to focus on HCV infection.

- The authors focused only on publications from Pubmed; this is a limiting method, because the concept, as already said, involves political, strategic, financial and social components. It could be better if authors deepen research based on national reports, health bulletin from health ministries, congress and conferences data. It should give more details about the real situation in countries regarding this issue.

HCV infection, as well as other health issues regarding prisoners, is not only a health problem, but also a social and economic problem. However, these subjects, in our opinion, are outside the scope of this review, which marginally touches upon points regarding issues different from the clinical aspects. The primary aim of this review was to assess the scientific literature data on HCV infection in prisoners.

- The way manuscript is written gives an impression of neglect; please revise the style of your paper

The manuscript has been thoroughly revised for style and proof-read by a native English speaker.

- In the paragraph "Different results were reported in two interesting studies comparing the prevalences of anti-HCV-positive cases between prisoners and members of the staff. Tresó et al. [22] performed a multicenter cross-sectional study in Hungary and found a significant difference in the anti-HCV rate between prisoners (4.9%) and the wardens (0.47%), whereas Adjei et al. [31] found the same anti-HCV prevalence (18.7%) in prison officers and prisoners in nine prisons in Ghana, suggesting an occupation-related transmission in this country"

It's a quite distorted idea to say that it suggests an occupation-related transmission in this country, because simply, in Ghana, the prevalence of HCV infection is basically very high (around 15%) in the general population. Indeed, it's ethically not allowed to charge prison staff that they are sharing drug injection tools with prisoners, nor that they have illegal homosexual behavior with them. It is not similar to the occupational transmission in the health care profession. Please, be aware of it.

We have revised the language regarding the conditions that might explain the similar prevalence of HCV infection between prisoners and staff (page 8, last line)

Minor issues

- Please number lines and pages in the text

We have numbered the pages of the manuscript.

“A prospective study [24] on 210 anti-HCV-negative subjects observed every 6/12 months for up to 4 years showed an incidence of HCV infection of 14.8 per 100 persons per year”.

This sentence is a bit isolated from the general flow of ideas and come out of the middle of nowhere. In addition, it could be better if you mention the context of the study (author, year, country...) to understand what it refers to without researching the paper in reference or in Pubmed.

We have moved this sentence to another paragraph (page 9, line 5) and added more details about the study. As observed by the reviewer, this makes the sentence clearer and more useful in the context.

- Several references are missing or false, please check your reference list:

We apologize for mistakes due to inadequate typing and final reading. The reference list has been checked and revised.

We thank you for your kind attention and hope the article is now worthy of publication in the World Journal of Hepatology.

Sincerely Yours

Rosa Zampino M.D., Ph.D.