

ANSWERING REVIEWERS



May 27th, 2013.

Dear Editor,

Please find enclosed the edited manuscript in Word format.

Title: Comparative effectiveness of traditional chemoembolization alone versus TACE with Sorafenib for the treatment of unresectable hepatocellular carcinoma.

Authors: Adnan Muhammad, MD, Manish Dhamija, MD, Gitanjali Vidyarthi, MD, Donald Amodeo, MD, William Boyd, MD, Branko Miladinovic, Ph.D., Ambuj Kumar, MD MPH.

Name of Journal: *World Journal of Hepatology*

ESPS Manuscript NO: 3235

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The manuscript has been improved according to the suggestions of reviewers:

1. Format has been updated.
2. Revision has been made according to the suggestions of the reviewers:
 - (1) “BCLC staging was a significant predictor of survival. Inclusion of more advanced patients in the combination therapy group might have affected the outcome, leading to the wrong conclusion. Therefore, the authors should re-analyze data after excluding BCLC-C patients and confirm that their conclusion is the same”. This has been done and the conclusion was same after excluding the BCLC-C patients as mentioned in the results and table 4 of the manuscript.

- (2) “There was no "trend" towards a survival benefit from combined therapy despite the authors claim. The differences were not statistically different, and not even close to significant at that, and thus any claims of superiority should be removed. At least one (perhaps more) of the TACE only arms had a patient with an AFP > 6000. This suggests under staging of at least one BCLC C patient (AFP > 1000 indicates vascular invasion, possibly not detected by the imaging modality chosen utilized by the authors). If one excludes patients with AFP > 800 or 1000, are there any "trends" differences in survival?” The superiority statement is removed. There was no difference of survival after removing the patients with AFP > 400 as mentioned in the result section of the manuscript.
- (3) “The severe cases were found more in TACE only group (Hep C and Hep C + Alcohol). The histology also seemed more severe at TACE only group”. There was no statistically significant difference of baseline characteristics in the 2 groups as shown in table 3.

3. References and typesetting were also corrected.

Thank you again for publishing our manuscript in the *World Journal of Hepatology*.

Sincerely yours,

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