

**Name of journal: World Journal of Clinical Cases**

**ESPS Manuscript NO: 18102**

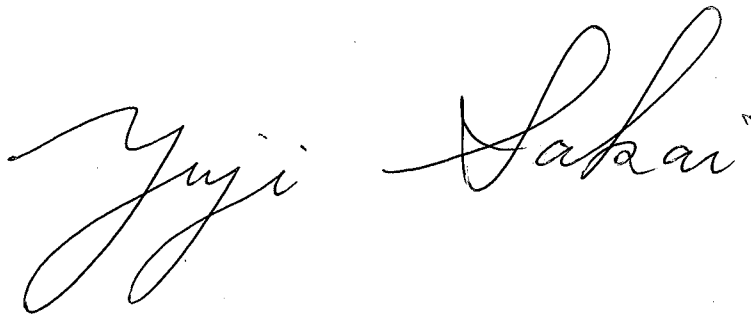
**Manuscript Type: Original Article**

***Prospective Study***

**New tapered metallic stent for unresectable malignant hilar bile duct obstruction**

**Institutional review board statement:** This study was conducted under approval of our ethical committee, and was registered as prospective clinical trial.

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A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Yuji Sakai". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style. The first name "Yuji" is on the left, and the last name "Sakai" is on the right, with a small superscript "n" above the final "i".