

Authors' answers to reviewers

Reviewer 1 (ID:02462179): Dear Reviewer

First of all we would like to thank you very much for your kind words and suggestions. As for your comment in page 8 line 25 of the initial manuscript “non-cirrhotic patients who achieved SVR had an even lower annual incidence of HCC, at 0.34% while the cirrhotic responders presented an annual incidence of 1.8%, comparable to that of non-responders (3.6%).”, we looked thoroughly at the article of Dr Kanwal (number 25 on our reference list) and although it states that non-responders had the 3.45% (instead of 3.6% we have written by mistake) annual incidence, it doesn't discriminate between cirrhotic/non-cirrhotic patients. We totally agree with you that we should have referred HCC incidence in non-responders according to cirrhosis status, but this information cannot be retrieved from the published article of Dr Kanwal. In order to be more precise we added “irrespectively of cirrhosis status” after “...that of non-responders”, as in table 2 of the manuscript of Dr Kanwal it is noted that the incidence rates were calculated using a multivariable model adjusted for age, gender, sex, cirrhosis diagnosis etc.

In case you may have any further questions regarding this manuscript please feel free to contact us.

Reviewer 1 (ID: 00697631): Dear Reviewer,

First of all we would like to thank you very much for your kind words and suggestions. The notices you have pointed out were really valuable. Indeed we had misplaced non-cirrhotic instead of cirrhotic in page 11, which has been changed to correct. Regarding your second notice on Figure 2, we have inserted a direct arrow from HSC's to fibrosis as you are absolutely right, HSC's do secrete chemokines that cause fibrosis.

In case you may have any further questions regarding this manuscript please feel free to contact us.

The authors:

Eleni Gigi

Vasileios Lagopoulos

Eleni Bekiari

