# Format for ANSWERING REVIEWERS

December 25, 2013

Dear Editor,

Please find enclosed the edited manuscript in Word format (file name: 5566-review.docx).

**Title:** Cancer in Eastern Libya: First Results from Benghazi Medical Center.

**Author:** Zuhir Bodalal, Raouf Azzuz, Riyad Bendardaf

**Name of Journal:** *World Journal of Gastroenterology*

**ESPS Manuscript NO:** 5566

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:

**Reviewer #1**

**Q1: "The title could become more attractive to the reader"**

**A1:** In response to the reviewer's comments, the title of the study has been changed to " *Cancer in Eastern Libya: First Results from Benghazi Medical Center.* " This highlights the novelty of our findings and at the same time draws the reader in with the name of the hospital.

**Q2: "Abstract: This section could be improved. The discussion part of the abstract contains sentences that are unclear. This part should also state why is this study important and what makes this study worth publication."**

**A2:** Appropriate changes have been made to the abstract to take into consideration these comments. The aim was modified, the discussion section of the abstract was clarified and a sentence to mention the importance of this study was added. Also one of the main selling points of this study is that it is the first time in 10 years that cancer incidence has been calculated in Libya (and I added that part to the aim of the abstract).

**Q3: "Core tips: Is this part necessary?"**

**A3:** The core tips section is one of the requirements to submit to the World Journal of Gastroenterology and is mentioned the "Instructions for Authors".

**Q4: "Introduction: this part needs more development. Sentences for an introduction is not enough. Where is the aim of your study? It should be normally included in this part.""**

**A4:** I added a single sentence to the introduction. The authors are following the British Medical Journal style of introduction which teaches that the introduction remains short and answers three main points (*what we know, what we don't know and how we planned to solve it*).

**Q5: "Methods: last sentence of the "Study population" is not clear. Why did you restrict data collection for 1 year? Did you collect information about SES and educational level?"**

**A5:** The last sentence of "Study Population" was made more clear. Data gathering in a developing country is difficult and Libya in particular is notorious in this matter. The combination of poor record keeping, lack of hospital organization and bureaucracy has hindered researchers in my country for a very long time. In our case, any data that was reliable and available for most of the cases was included in the study. The parameters that you mentioned (i.e. SES, educational level etc) would have been very nice to include, however they were not available. Only one year was included in this study since that was the year when data was available (previous years had a massive number of missing files). The authors are currently planning to include other years, however that is in the future. The poor data quality was mentioned as a limitation in the study.

**Q6: " Results: You could have described Table 3 and 4 more adequately. In addition, you have included some Results in the Discussion part of the manuscript which is not appropriate."**
**A6:** Tables 3 and 4 have been elaborated further in the Results section. The figures that have been mentioned in the discussion session are all derived from the Tables and which have been mentioned first in the Results section and during formatting will be placed before the discussions. This merely serves to remind the reader of the values without having to turn back to the Results/Tables.

**Q7: " Discussion: This part normally starts with a paragraph which summarizes the main study's findings. I would like to see some explanation of some of your findings e.g. "While the overall incidence of colon cancer.....it was previously thought that the rate of malignancies in the eastern region was significantly higher." I would like to see some explanation of why is this study useful and important. Are there any implications for practice? You should convince the Editors and the reviewers that this study deserves publication. "**
**A7:** This discussion section was modified slightly to highlight the main findings. The structure currently in place starts with the importance/novelty of this study, then proceeds to the main findings of this study. The discussions section ends by a conclusive paragraph.

**Q8: " Please add a conclusive paragraph."**
**A8:** A conclusive paragraph has been added. Thank you.

**Q9: "Tables need some format e.g. include a row names as column age above the min, max, sd."**
**A9:** The tables have been modified to the journal's format. The table that you mentioned (Table 1 with the age) has been clarified. Thank you very much for your valuable insight, we are grateful to you for helping us make this study better and I hope that our revisions have been suitable. We look forward to seeing this publication soon since my country sorely needs to develop its cancer plan.

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**Reviewer #2**

**Q1: "Some details of the statistical methods are missing and need to be clarified. There is no discussion of the denominator (population) used for incidence calculations (does it refer to a national census?). There is no reference to where the denominator is drawn from. The age standardization is also mysterious. No details are given. We are not told which population the incidence calculations are standardized to, or which method is used."**
**A1:** The statistical methods section of the methodology has been expanded to cover these points. Typically, the method of ASR calculation is understood within the framework of cancer epidemiology, however, I realize it must be unfamiliar for other readers. It was already mentioned that the population for eastern Libya was determined

using the 2006 Libyan census and I added a sentence to the study population mentioning the official population of the eastern region in 2006. The 2012 population was determined by taking into consideration the 2% population growth rate for Libya.

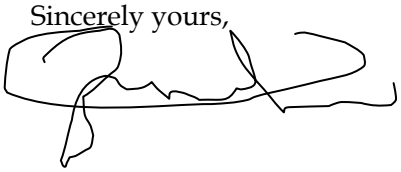
**Q2: "In addition, comparisons by gender and age should be made on incidence rates rather than the cases alone."**

**A2:** A statement was added to the results section referring to the gender difference in terms of age-standardized rates. The Tables contain comparisons by

3 References and typesetting were corrected

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

Sincerely yours,



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