

Format for ANSWERING REVIEWERS



January 22, 2014

Dear Editor,

Please find enclosed the edited manuscript in Word format (file name: 6654-review.doc).

Title: Epidemiology of acute and chronic hepatitis B and delta over the last 5 decades in Italy

Authors: Evangelista Sagnelli, Caterina Sagnelli, Mariantonietta Pisaturo, Margherita Macera, Nicola Coppola

Name of Journal: *World Journal of Gastroenterology*

ESPS Manuscript NO: 6654

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

1 Format has been updated

2 Revision has been made according to the suggestions of the reviewer

3 References and typesetting have been corrected

Reviewed by 00058672 The authors study the epidemiology of acute and chronic hepatitis B and Delta over the last 5 decades in Italy. The document is well-written with outstanding illustrations. I found the results to be compelling and proper for publication. I recommend that a minor revision is needed, to add the limitation in the discussion section

Answer: As suggested by the reviewer, the limitations of the study have been added in the discussion section of the new manuscript.

Reviewed by 00011221 Dr. Sagnelli and colleagues present a well-crafted historical accounting of chronic HBV and HDV in Italy. They chronicle the impact of universal vaccination on observed incidence of acute hepatitis B and chronic hepatitis D infection. I found this informative, but a significant amount of grammatical correction will be required.

Answer: As suggested by the reviewer the manuscript has been thoroughly revised by a native speaker of English.

Reviewed by 00049433 This is a generally well written review on the epidemiology of HBV and HDV in Italy however I have a few suggestions to hopefully improve the manuscript. Abstract: The first line of the abstract does not state if the figures given are from Italy or elsewhere, this should be addressed. General Structure: The authors should: 1. give a brief introduction to HBV and HDV from a clinical perspective 2. summarise the worldwide epidemiological data on these conditions to give the reader some perspective 3. expand a section on the risk factors for HBV and HDV infection, giving further details on each 4. give a brief explanation on the SEIEVA program and the setup of ISTAT 5. insert a brief paragraph on the trends in risk factors in Italy (i.e. rates of IDU, rates of parenteral transmission) Also, are the data shown in Figure 1A age-sex standardised rates (i.e. are all rates standardised to one single common denominator) to allow direct comparisons to be made between years?

Answer: Abstract: The first line of the abstract has been modified as suggested by the reviewer and we have made it clear that the figures given refer to Italy.

General Structure:

Answer to General Structure :

1: A brief introduction to HBV and HDV from a clinical perspective has been added.

2: The worldwide epidemiological data on these conditions have been summarized in the new manuscript as suggested to give the reader some perspective.

3 and 5: A brief paragraph on the trends in the risk factors for HBV and HDV infection has been introduced and further details on each risk factor have been added in the new manuscript. (i.e. rates of IDU, rates of parenteral transmission)

4. A brief explanation of the SEIEVA program and details of ISTAT have been added in the new manuscript.

Data shown in Figure 1A: these data are not standardized by age and sex. As suggested by the reviewer, the data standardized by age and sex have been reported in the text of the new manuscript.

Reviewed by 00007470 In this interesting review article, the Authors described how the epidemiology of HBV and HDV infection has favorably changed in Italy over the last 50 years. The decline of hepatitis B in Italy was mainly attributed to the following factors: improvement in socio-economic and hygiene conditions; educational and media campaigns against HIV infection; HBV mass vaccination introduced in 1991. Although the changes in the epidemiology of HBV infection in Italy is thoroughly explained and the text is pleasant to read, there are no original data because it is widely known that in recent decades the improvement of hygienic conditions, preventive measures against AIDS and mass vaccination against hepatitis B have led to a reduction in hepatitis B in many countries. Particularly, has been widely reported that mass vaccination against hepatitis B has had a favorable impact on the spread of hepatitis B and consequently the incidence of hepatocellular carcinoma (Taiwan). Therefore, the present review article does not appear to have messages of general interest

Answer: Our review article considers all interesting papers on HBV and HDV epidemiology so far published referring to Italy. Some novelties can be found in the interpretation of changes in HBV and

HDV epidemiology made by Italian authors who have been investigating and publishing on these topics from more than 40 years.

We thank the reviewers for their constructive comments and hope our revised manuscript is worthy of publication in the *World Journal of Gastroenterology*

Sincerely yours,
Prof Evangelista Sagnelli
Department of Mental Health and Public Medicine,
Section of Infectious Diseases,
Second University of Naples,
Via: L. Armanni 5, 80131 Naples, ITALY,
Tel: 081/5666719, Fax: 081/5666013,
e-mail: evangelista.sagnelli@yahoo.com