

Dear Editor,

Many thanks for the kind invitation to submit our study to the Journal of Hepatology.

With regards to a biostatistics certificate, we do not have this. However, the data has been analysed by statistical experts who are named authors on the paper. We also do not have a non-native speakers of English editing certificate, but members of the authorship team are native English speakers and have edited the paper accordingly.

Regarding your request for informed consent forms, we can assure the journal that the study has been ethically approved from the ethics committee of Shahid Sadoughi University of Medical Sciences (approval code: IR.SSU.SPH.REC.1399.046). Findings from the study have also been previously published in a number of well-renowned peer-reviewed journals (examples can be found at: <https://scholar.google.com/citations?user=HCb7Ou8AAAAJ&hl=en>).

We very much hope that this might be acceptable for your journal and look forward to hearing from you soon.

Kind regards,

Dr Richard Webb