



MGH Divisions of General Internal Medicine and Infectious Diseases
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Dear Dr. Yuan Qi, Dear Reviewers,

Thank you very much for taking the time to review our manuscript “**HBV Outreach to Immigrant Population in Greater Boston Area: Key to Improving Hepatitis B Knowledge**”. We greatly appreciate your comments and have responded to them on a point by point basis in the letter below. The corresponding changes have been made in the edited manuscript included in this resubmission, with all changes outlined using track-changes.

RESPONSES TO REVIEWERS

Reviewer 1.

COMMENTS TO AUTHORS

1. The manuscript described a teaching session to improve understanding of hepatitis B virus infection by people in a local community.

Yes.

2. The questionnaire is well designed and the procedure properly conducted.

Thank you.

3. The number of male participants is small, while the male are easier to suffer from liver cancer. It is better to pay more attention to spreading the information of prevention by lifestyle adjustment, including nutrition, exercise, daily rest, and cheerful spirit.

We thank the reviewers for this comment. It is true that the number of male participants is small, and that males are more predisposed to liver cancer than females. We note (and have edited the manuscript Results section, p8-9 to reflect) that several of our outreach sessions were well attended by both male and female participants. We were asked by our Somali community liaison to adhere to cultural norms related to healthcare discussions and provide separate sessions for women only, as our session leader (Dr. Fusco) is female. We do very much hope that 1) female members of the immigrant community will bring the message of HBV awareness back to their male family members / community members, and did ask them to do same at the teaching sessions, and 2) we will be able to provide additional male-led teaching sessions specifically for men in the future.

4. The study is educational but scientifically limited. It is more suitable for an education journal.

We thank the Reviewer for this comment. While we acknowledge that one goal of this study was to improve awareness, we should also clarify that a second goal was to build relations between the health care provider community and people at risk for HBV who may not otherwise seek treatment. We hope that publication of this work in a broadly – read journal such as the WJG might encourage other HBV providers (including those not focused on education per se) to go out into their community and spread HBV awareness while destigmatizing the disease. We have attempted to communicate this in the Comments- Applications section, where we state that “We hope that this model for HBV outreach will be directly applied by others around the globe to quickly and effectively prompt at-risk persons to seek HBV care. To underscore that intention, we have provided a “toolkit” with copies of our pre/post-session questionnaire (Fig. S1) and navigator card (Fig. S2) for immediate use by others toward the concerted effort of 2030 HBV Eradication.”

Reviewer 2.

COMMENTS TO AUTHORS

An unusual paper that merits publication. It will provoke discussion. *We thank the Reviewer for these comments.*

Reviewer 3.



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COMMENTS TO AUTHORS

This is an interesting paper showing that patients' education can improve their knowledge regarding an important disease (especially in some population).

Some critical points:

1. Small cohort of patients with pre and post course test and as a consequence difficult to establish statistical significance.
We thank the Reviewer for these comments : We agree that the sample size was relatively small as this was exploratory research, and there had been no a priori calculation of a target sample size based on a specific hypothesis to be tested. The data collected in our study may help determine the design and sample size of future studies. We have added these comments to the Limitations discussion of our manuscript (p.11).

2. Evaluation of participants' school degree as a modality to understand their ability to know a medical problem.
We appreciate this comment. We acknowledge that our failure to obtain education information from participants is a limitation of our study. We have added this to the limitations section (p.11), and, if future studies are performed, will include this parameter.

Reviewer 4.

COMMENTS TO AUTHORS

1. This study is of significance. While the number of participants is relatively small which may influence the overall results.

We thank the Reviewer for this comment. We acknowledge that the number of participants is relatively small and may influence overall results, and have added this statement to the limitations section (p.11). We do hope that successful completion of this pilot study will enable us to generate support to perform additional larger studies in the future.

2. The survey was conducted on the spot before and after teaching lesson. The positive results may not reflect the precise acknowledgement of risk of HBV infection. Because after a period of time, some of the knowledge may be forgotten. The survey should be conducted in a few months.

We greatly appreciate this comment from the Reviewer. We have acknowledged the lack of retesting for knowledge retention as a limitation of this study (limitations section, p.11-12), and hope that we will be able to perform additional, longer term studies in the future to address this limitation. Unfortunately, retesting was beyond the scope of the current study.

3. Whether the reliability and validity of questionnaire should be tested should consult the statisticians.

We appreciate this suggestion from the Reviewer. We have included a statement of the Statistical qualifications of our team member Gonzague Jourdain, MD, MSc (Statistics and Health Sciences), PhD, Institut de Recherche pour le developpement (IRD), France to clarify that we have consulted a statistician in the revised draft of our manuscript (p.2), and have also submitted a certificate in PDF form of Dr. Jourdain's qualifications.

RESPONSES TO THE EDITOR:

Comment 1: Add **Scientific Research Process** addressing the following questions and include file including manuscript with edits as a PDF signed by the Corresponding Author.

1. What did this study explore?
2. How did the authors perform all experiments?
3. How did the authors process all experimental data?
4. How did the authors deal with the pre-study hypothesis?
5. What are the novel findings of this study?

We have added the scientific research process answering questions 1-5 above to the manuscript, and have attached this as a separate PDF document signed by the corresponding author.



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Comment 2: A short running title of less than 6 words should be provided.

We have provided a running title: HBV Outreach to Boston Immigrant Population.

Comment 3: All files must be signed by the corresponding author and provided in a PDF format.

The corresponding author has signed all the statements as you suggested. These files are attached to our manuscript as a PDF document.

Comment 4: Biostatistics Statement: The statement “The statistical methods of this study were reviewed by [name(s) of individual(s)] from [name(s) of organization(s)]...” must be mentioned in the text, and a certificate of statistical review signed by a biostatistician must be provided in PDF format.

We have added the biostatistics statement in the text (p.2) as requested. We have also provided in PDF format the certificate of statistical review signed by our Biostatistician, Gonzague Jourdain MD, MSc (Statistics and Health Sciences), PhD, Institut de recherche pour le développement (IRD, France).

Comment 5: Please write the COMMENTS section following the Acknowledgements according to the format provided.

Thank you very much for the comment. We have updated the document by adding the comment section (starting on p.13), which includes Background, Research Frontiers, Innovations and Breakthrough, Applications, Terminology and the Peer-review subtitles. Please refer to our manuscript for these modifications.

Comment 6: Please provide the decomposable figure of Figures, whose parts are movable and can be edited, as word, ppt or excel format so that they can be easily edited.

We have provided all figures in XXX format for editing.

We believe that, through the corrections outlined above, we have addressed all concerns raised by the Reviewers as well as the Editor. We greatly appreciate your reconsideration of our manuscript at this time.

Thank you sincerely,

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