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ESPS Peer-review Report

Name of Journal: World Journal of Gastroenterology

ESPS Manuscript NO: 8106

Title: Cost-effectiveness analysis of beta-blockers vs. endoscopic surveillance in patients with cirrhosis and small varices.

Reviewer code: 00008736

Science editor: Ma, Ya-Juan

Date sent for review: 2013-12-16 15:47

Date reviewed: 2013-12-17 17:36

CLASSIFICATION	LANGUAGE EVALUATION	RECOMMENDATION	CONCLUSION
<input type="checkbox"/> Grade A (Excellent)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grade A: Priority Publishing	Google Search:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Accept
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grade B (Very good)	<input type="checkbox"/> Grade B: minor language polishing	<input type="checkbox"/> Existed	<input type="checkbox"/> High priority for publication
<input type="checkbox"/> Grade C (Good)	<input type="checkbox"/> Grade C: a great deal of language polishing	<input type="checkbox"/> No records	<input type="checkbox"/> Rejection
<input type="checkbox"/> Grade D (Fair)	<input type="checkbox"/> Grade D: rejected	BPG Search:	<input type="checkbox"/> Minor revision
<input type="checkbox"/> Grade E (Poor)		<input type="checkbox"/> Existed	<input type="checkbox"/> Major revision
		<input type="checkbox"/> No records	

COMMENTS TO AUTHORS

In this paper, Di Pascoli et al analyse the cost-effectiveness of beta-blockers in surveillance and outcome of early esophageal varices in patients with liver cirrhosis compared to endoscopy measures. The authors provide a clear rationale for the study set-up and give detailed statistical descriptions of the methods. The manuscript is well written and the results are presented concise but clear. The discussion is to the point and highlights the current knowledge. Overall, the manuscript is acceptable for publication with only minor changes needed: Legends to figures and tables should be provided (not only headlines). Is it possible to combine figure 1 and 2?



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Title: Cost-effectiveness analysis of beta-blockers vs. endoscopic surveillance in patients with cirrhosis and small varices.

Reviewer code: 00053634

Science editor: Ma, Ya-Juan

Date sent for review: 2013-12-16 15:47

Date reviewed: 2013-12-28 02:38

Table with 4 columns: CLASSIFICATION, LANGUAGE EVALUATION, RECOMMENDATION, CONCLUSION. It lists criteria for manuscript grades (A-E) and corresponding actions like 'Accept', 'High priority for publication', 'Rejection', 'Minor revision', and 'Major revision'.

COMMENTS TO AUTHORS

General comment: The authors aimed at comparing the cost-effectiveness of early beta-blockers therapy (Strategy 1) vs. endoscopic surveillance followed by beta-blockers when large varices develop (Strategy 2), in prevention of variceal growth/bleeding in subjects with cirrhosis and small esophageal varices. The paper is very interesting and well-written. There are very few points that need to be improved before recommending publication. Major issues: 1) The authors should use an appropriate way to present data. In the table 1 they use apparently mean ± SD. However at-least for Child-Pugh score this is not appropriate. In this case median and interquartile range is the right way of presenting data. Moreover they should check all quantitative variables for distribution (Gaussian vs. non-Gaussian) and present data consequently. Based on the distribution of variables, also statistical tests to compare them vary. The test used and the p value must be presented in the table and a paragraph on statistical analysis used to compare these variables is needed. The tables and figures are lacking of legends. Finally they should not give results in the headings of the table 1 (it now reads: "...No significant differences (0.05 level) were observed between the two groups). 2) The authors should at-least in the introduction state that there are some papers that have looked for a different way to address this issue: i.e. the use of non-invasive score to predict (large) varices. They can find useful data in the following papers: Adami MR, Ferreira CT, Kieling CO, Hirakata V, Vieira SM. Noninvasive methods for prediction of esophageal varices in pediatric patients with portal hypertension. World J Gastroenterol. 2013 Apr 7;19(13):2053-9 Barikbin R, Hekmatnia A, Omidifar N, Farghadani M, Adibi P. Prediction severity of esophageal varices: a new cutoff point for Platelet



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count/ spleen diameter ratio. *Minerva Gastroenterol Dietol.* 2010;56:1-6. Agha A, Abdulhadi MM, Marengo S, Bella A, Alsaudi D, El-Haddad A, Inferrera S, Savarino V, Giannini EG. Use of the platelet count/spleen diameter ratio for the noninvasive diagnosis of esophageal varices in patients with schistosomiasis. *Saudi J Gastroenterol.* 2011 Sep-Oct;17(5):307-11. Berzigotti A, Gilabert R, Abraldes JG, Nicolau C, Bru C, Bosch J, García-Pagan JC. Noninvasive prediction of clinically significant portal hypertension and esophageal varices in patients with compensated liver cirrhosis. *Am J Gastroenterol.* 2008 May;103(5):1159-67. Chawla S, Katz A, Attar BM, Gupta A, Sandhu DS, Agarwal R. Platelet count/spleen diameter ratio to predict the presence of esophageal varices in patients with cirrhosis: a systematic review. *Eur J Gastroenterol Hepatol.* 2012;24(4):431-6. Thabut D, Moreau R, Lebre C. Noninvasive assessment of portal hypertension in patients with cirrhosis. *Hepatology.* 2011 Feb;53(2):683-94. Gentile I, Thabut D. Noninvasive prediction of oesophageal varices: as simple as blood count? *Liver Int.* 2010; 30: 1091-3. de Franchis R. Noninvasive diagnosis of esophageal varices: is it feasible? *Am J Gastroenterol.* 2006 Nov;101(11):2520-2. de Mattos Z, de Mattos AA. Noninvasive methods for esophageal varices prediction in cirrhotic patients: are we there yet? *Gastroenterology.* 2013 May;144(5):1151-2. Giannini EG, Zaman A, Kreil A, Floreani A, Dulbecco P, Testa E, Sohaey R, Verhey P, Peck-Radosavljevic M, Mansi C, Savarino V, Testa R. Platelet count/spleen diameter ratio for the noninvasive diagnosis of esophageal varices: results of a multicenter, prospective, validation study. *Am J Gastroenterol.* 2006;101:2511-9. Gentile I, Viola C, Graf M, Liuzzi R, Quarto M, Cerini R, Piazza M, Borgia G. A simple noninvasive score predicts gastroesophageal varices in patients with chronic viral hepatitis. *J Clin Gastroenterol.* 2009 Jan;43(1):81-7. Kim BK, Ahn SH, Han KH, Park JY, Han MS, Jo JH, Kim JK, Lee KS, Chon CY, Kim do Y. Prediction of esophageal variceal bleeding in B-viral liver