ANSWERING REVIEWERS

December 5th, 2013

Dear Editor,

Please find enclosed the edited manuscript in Word format (file name: 5910-final.doc).

Title: Tools for the diagnosis of HCV infection and hepatic fibrosis staging

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Name of Journal: *World Journal of Gastroenterology*

ESPS Manuscript NO: 5910

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

1. Format has been updated and references and typesetting were corrected.

2. The manuscript has been edited by a native English speaker who is a professional editor (please see attached certificate). These changes have not been highlighted.

3. Revision has been made according to the suggestions of the reviewers (changes highlighted in yellow):

Answers to reviewer number 00181536:

1. Page5 line11; "detect" might be "direct".

The authors do not agree with the change suggested by the reviewer. The word "detect" (now page 7 line 12) has been maintained, as we are referring to antibody detection by serologic assays.

2. Page5 line12; What is "HCV-specific total antibodies"? Please specify the word "total".

Following the reviewer's comment, the word "total" has been specified as follows: "(…) HCV-specific total antibodies *(IgM and IgG)* and are used (…)", in page 7 line 17.

3. Table5; footnotes concerning abbreviations should be added.

According to the reviewer's suggestion, footnotes have been added.

Answers to reviewer number 00343118:

1. Page 5: even if the sentence is intuitive explain "thus, screening effective and fast diagnosis of HCV are highly relevant for ...?"

According to the suggestion of the reviewer, this sentence, now in page 7, has been changed as follows: "Thus, effective screening and fast diagnosis of HCV are highly relevant *steps in preventing disease progression and virus spread, since they allow infected persons to be identified and treated.*"

2. Page 6: check whether the term low PPV in low-risk population is correct or if it goes substituted with low specificity?

The authors have checked this term, now in page 8, and have considered that it is correct. Diagnostic tests have a lower positive predictive value in a low-risk population than in a high-risk population, as the predictive value depends on the prevalence of the infection in the population.

3. Indicate the significance of SEPTA (Page 15) and HA (p 17).

The term "septa" (now in page 17) which means "wall", is a term commonly used by hepatologists without giving any other definition. Thus, the authors do not consider that this term has to be defined in another way.

The significance of the term HA (hyaluronic acid) was already given on page 16, before the appearance of this abbreviation on page 17.

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

Sincerely yours,

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