

## Cover letter

Dear editorial board of World Journal of Gastrointestinal Surgery,

Thank you very much for another opportunity to submit a revised and improved version of the manuscript titled: " **Special surgical approaches during peri-COVID-19 pandemic: Robotic and Transanal minimally invasive Surgery (TEM/TAMIS/TaTME)**". Moreover, we would like to thank the reviewers for their valuable suggestions to improve our manuscript.

Please find below all the reviewers' comments accompanied by our point-by-point reply and revisions to the manuscript. In text revisions were marked yellow in the attached revised manuscript.

We sincerely hope to meet the high standards of our journal with these improvements!

Kind regards,

Rosa M Jimenez Rodriguez on behalf of the rest of the research team.

Reviewer Comments:

**Reviewer #1:**

The authors evaluated the suitability of robotic and transanal surgery in the peri-COVID-19. This manuscript can be helpful for centers that perform these surgical procedures.

**We thank the reviewer for the comments.**

**Reviewer #2:** Although slightly out of date but the idea of manuscript seems innovative and relevant. It feels like authors are trying to convey the novel ideas, but are blending them with ESCP recommendations too much.

We thank reviewer 2 for the comments to improve our manuscript. We agree that adding ESCP recommendations could be longer to read but the idea is to support current scientific evidence with documents coming from international societies in the field of the colorectal surgery.

It would be great if the authors would acknowledge the limitations / draw backs of the robotics and transanal and minimally invasive surgeries.

We thank the reviewer for this comment. We added the limitations and drawbacks of robotics and transanal approaches during COVID pandemic to our manuscript. Nevertheless, limitations of the specific approaches are not discussed in the text.

Also if they can add the knowledge / experience of the outcomes with respect to these techniques during ongoing covid pandemic.

We thank the reviewer for this comment. In our opinion, outcomes and experience in this technique during pandemic times is a very interesting task to discuss. Nevertheless, short and/or long-term outcomes are not the aim of this paper although, as the reviewer, we think it is something to review and to work on.

Incorporating a brief discussion regarding categorization / case selection for the same will also be appreciated.

We thank the reviewer for this comment and we agree that one of the most important points when talking about new approaches is case selection. In this case, we focus in pandemic times, so we specified and added to the text, case selection during COVID pandemic. Outside of this specific period, and with respect to robotic and transanal approaches, case selection should be performed regarding the experience of the surgeon, the center or even the availability of the robotic platform as described in the literature.