

July 22, 2013

Dear Editor,

Please find enclosed the edited manuscript in Word format (file name: 4005 revised.docx).

Title: Prevalence of Minimal Hepatic Encephalopathy and Quality of Life Evaluations in Hospitalized Cirrhotic Patients in China

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Name of Journal: *World Journal of Gastroenterology*

ESPS Manuscript NO: 4005

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

1 Format has been updated

2 Revision has been made according to the suggestions of the reviewer **00053451**

(1) "Abstract Please specify the patient number."

It has been described in the abstract as "Cirrhotic patients without overt hepatic encephalopathy (n = 519) were mostly male (68.6%) with a mean age of 49.17± 11.02 years."

(2) "Introduction Page 8 "impact factors in hospitalized cirrhotic patients" What does it mean? "

The sentence was revise to: "This study investigated the prevalence of MHE in hospitalized cirrhotic patients from different areas of China, and HRQOL evaluations among them."

(3) "Methods Page 8 Study population Although the subtitle is study population, there is no patient number in this paragraph."

In the manuscript, we had described the study population in which we conducted this investigation as "All consecutive cirrhotic hospitalized patients between the ages of 18 and 70 years old and without overt hepatic encephalopathy (OHE) were screened for MHE between June and October, 2011", which means all eligible patients should have been screened. Therefore, finally 538 patients were screened and 519 of them met the study's criteria for inclusion. We described the number of included patients in the section of RESULT-study patient.

(4) "Normative values for NCT-A and DST were based on healthy volunteers with the same geographical background as liver cirrhosis patients." How was this study performed? There is no description about it. How did they recruit the participants?

According to this reference: Bao ZJ, Qiu DK, Ma X, Zhang GS, Gu T, Yu XF, Fan ZP, Li JQ, Zeng MD. The application of psychometric measures in diagnosis of minimal hepatic encephalopathy. *Chin J Dig* 2006; 26(9): 606-609.

Bao et al included 169 healthy volunteers who are aged 25 to 64 years and educational level >9 years. They were divided into <35 ys, 35~44 ys, 45~54 ys and 55~64 ys groups. All of the healthy volunteers were assessed with NCT-A and DST to establish

the normal value of age-related parameters, which can be used for diagnosis of MHE in patients with liver cirrhosis. Two standard deviation of the normal mean was used as a diagnostic criterion for MHE. One hundred and six cirrhotic patients were assessed with these parameters to query and confirm the normal value of age-related parameters.

(5) "Results Page 13 "Liver cirrhosis was present for 2.54 ± 3.16 years." What does this sentence mean?"

This sentence has been revised to "Included patients were diagnosed with liver cirrhosis for 2.54 ± 3.16 years."

(6) "Discussion Please clearly state that this study has a strong bias as it was performed in hospitalized patients. Second, prevalence and clinical features of MHE depend on the definition used in the study."

Indeed, this study was designed as an investigation in hospitalized cirrhotic patients and therefore there was no out-patient included. However we defined the study population pretty clearly at the very beginning. There was no bias of study population. Nevertheless, we will expand an investigation in both in-patient and out-patient as a further study to assess the prevalence of cirrhotic patients in China.

(7) "Page 19, lines 5-6 What does the underline mean? "

It has been deleted.

(8) "Figure 1 has only title and there is no legend here. "

It was revised and resubmitted.

Revision has been made according to the suggestions of the reviewer 00506450

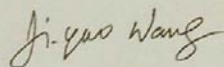
(1) "It is that Chronic and heavy drinking alters neurobiological systems . but in this paper, there were CHB accompanied by alcoholic liver disease (ALD) (11.8%), ALD (8.9%). "

The exclusion criteria included "history of taking alcohol intake during the previous 6 weeks; neurologic abnormalities such as Alzheimer's disease, Parkinson's disease, non-hepatic metabolic encephalopathy, electrolyte disorders, inability to perform psychometric tests or complete the questionnaire (caused by either insufficient knowledge of the Chinese language or poor vision)." Therefore even the patients had ALD but had no alcoholic encephalopathy.

3 References and typesetting were corrected

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

Sincerely yours,



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