Reviewer's report

Title: High serum alkaline phosphatase levels, a study in 181 Thai adult hospitalized patients

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Reviewer: Dr Raymond Poon

Level of interest: A paper whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

Advice on publication: Accept after revision, which I do not need to see

This is a retrospective study of 181 Thai adult hospitalized patients with ALP level above 1000 IU/L or roughly 3 times the upper end of normal. The scope of the study is limited to a classification of the diseases.

Comments:

1. Sepsis-associated cholestasis is a well-known condition (see e.g. Jansen and Muller, Gastroenterology 1999; 116: 486-8; Moseley, Clin Liver Dis. 1999; 3:465-75), and increased ALP is a common lab finding in patients with intra- or extra-hepatic cholestasis. The author should mention some of these publications to provide readers with a more comprehensive background on this topic. In addition he should also mentioned the work of Lee et al., (J. Hosp. Infect. 1994; 27:299-305) regarding elevated ALP in patients with Klensiella bacteraemia.

2. Although the finding of a high prevalence of sepsis in the hyperalkalinephosphatasemia patients is not novel, the identification of several tropical diseases amongst these septic patients is useful clinical information, especially for clinicians in the tropical and subtropical regions of the world.

Minor comments

1. Materials and Methods is more commonly used than Methods and Materials

2. Lines 6-8, Materials and Methods. Delete the sentence "The setting is the largest ..."

3. Line 8, Results. "The left..." should be changed to "Of the remaining 10 ..."

4. Reference 5. The Volume number is 27, not 2.
Competing interests:

None declared.