Reviewer's report

Title: Primary Biliary Cirrhosis in a genetically homogeneous population: Disease associations and familial occurrence rates.

Version: 2 Date: 1 April 2012

Reviewer: Carlo Selmi

Reviewer's report:

In this manuscript, Dr. Mantaka and Colleagues report a very interesting study based on previous reports of comorbidity and risk factors for PBC. The authors utilize a series of PBC cases (115/196 currently followed) and first degree relatives (FDR) plus an equal number of unrelated controls.

Major compulsory revisions.

One cannot avoid to consider the control populations as totally unacceptable for the proposed aims. First, the unrelated control group is too small and its origin is unclear. Similarly, FDR are obviously not sex-matched and prone to numerous types of error. Lastly, the response rate among patients is significantly low.

Minor essential revisions.

The results section is redundant and should be shortened significantly as its current form is confusing.

A description of the local health system would help.

The authors should justify the choice of a low alcohol intake for the definition of abuse.

How did the authors determine that 55% of FDR responded to their call.

Discretionary revision.

In the tables I would suggest including only specific variables and not all options (as in the case of BMI)

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests.