Reviewer's report

Title: MELD score and antibiotics use are predictors of length of stay in patients hospitalized with hepatic encephalopathy

Version: 1 Date: 5 August 2014

Reviewer: Alireza Norouzi

Reviewer's report:

Major compulsory revisions:
1- Study has implicated a common problem but there is dissociation in writing e.g. introduction does not mean continuity for readers and I think some changes in paragraphs (e.g. definition of hepatic encephalopathy could be given in first sentences,...), also this problem could be seen in presenting of results and discussion

2- Inclusion and exclusion criteria are not specifically defined in method and are given incomplete

3- Patients with several admission for HE at first data entry have not described precisely, this could impact final statistics.

4- Other underlying diseases have not implicated specifically (they are large numbers), also indication for admissions other than HE because in analysis these patients had poorer outcome

5- Lactulose and rifaximin are the basic treatments for HE but it has not shown in study why some patients have not received these and what had been given to them

6- Variables included in multivariable analysis have not implicated precisely

7- Some baseline characteristics of patients were not addressed in study properly and HCV patients have not described specifically why they had more favorable outcome

Minor essential revisions:

Some grammatical changes would be necessary and some abbreviations must clearly be addressed (IRB, MELD, IQR,..)

In table 2 data about age and MELD score (first column in every part) have no sense to reader

Maybe it would be better that table 2 presented in two parts
Level of interest: An article of limited interest

Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being published

Statistical review: Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.

Declaration of competing interests:
I declare that I have no competing interests