Author's response to reviews

Title: Diagnostic sensitivity of carbohydrate deficient transferrin in heavy drinkers

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Author's response to reviews: see over
Executive Editor

BMC Gastroenterology

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Dear Dr Morawska,

Re: Manuscript submission

Thank you for your email regarding submission of our manuscript entitled "Diagnostic sensitivity of carbohydrate deficient transferrin in heavy drinkers" for publication in BMC Gastroenterology.

We have amended the manuscript as requested:

- Included email addresses for each co-author in the title page.
- Included a competing interests section
- Included an authors’ contribution section

The identification and validation of biomarkers of heavy alcohol use is a key challenge in our field (managing patients with chronic liver disease) and many others. We examined 52 sustained heavy alcohol consumers, all of whom should have been ‘diagnosable’ by serum carbohydrate-deficient transferrin (CDT) level, using the standardized HPLC reference measurement technique. We demonstrate that increased body weight, female gender and cirrhosis severely limit the clinical utility of CDT, the most specific biomarker for heavy alcohol consumption so far described.

We believe this manuscript provides a novel, clinically important contribution to the alcohol biomarker literature, particularly since previous studies have not necessarily focused on heavy drinkers, and CDT is only useful as a marker of sustained heavy alcohol consumption, as we and others have shown.
All authors a) have contributed to and agreed on the content of the manuscript; b) acknowledge that the manuscript has not been published previously, in any language, in whole or in part, and is not currently under consideration elsewhere. Informed consent was obtained from each patient and the protocol was approved by Metro-South-Health and the University of Queensland Human Research Ethics Committees.

Yours Sincerely

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