Reviewer’s report

Title: Synergic Effect of Chronic Hepatitis C Infection and Beta Thalassemia Major with Marked Hepatic Iron Overload on Liver Fibrosis: A Retrospective Cross-Sectional Study

Version: 2 Date: 31 May 2004

Reviewer: Emanuele Angelucci

Reviewer’s report:

General
This is an interesting well written paper. The issue is time focused and provide important information for Physician involved in thalassemia care.

Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)

Statistical methods: selection criteria for group 2 and 3 and as they matched with group 1 should be better specified.

Table 1: table 1 is difficult to be interpreted: I would prefer Median and range values instead that single numbers. The key point is fibrosis score and should be emphasized.

Paper could be improved reporting quantitative liver iron concentration instead that semiquantitative values. The liver iron concentration can be easily determined on paraffin embedded specimens.

In the discussion I would omit the discussion on the effects of immunosuppression on liver fibrosis in transplanted Thalassemia patients. This paper demonstrate that the same conclusion is appliable to thalassemia patients also.

BMT is an uncommon abbreviation and can me misleading. I suggest to do not abbreviate Thalassemia Major.

Correct spelling is Angelucci and not Angellucci

Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)

Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

What next?: Accept after minor essential revisions

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable
Statistical review: Yes

Declaration of competing interests: None