Reviewer's report

Title: Hepatitis B virus infection in male volunteer blood donors in Karachi, Pakistan

Version: 1 Date: 4 March 2005

Reviewer: Ajay Duseja

Reviewer's report:

General

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

Is this study first of its kind in Pakistan? The authors should do more literature search and should discuss other population based or hospital based studies done in Pakistan rather than writing that the figures for HBV infection in Pakistan are not known. Some of the studies are mentioned for their ready reference.


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

1. In the Background reference 14 for the prevalence of HBV in thalassemia patients is not correct (Ref 14- is regarding healthy blood donors). Similarly reference 19 for HCC patients is incorrect.

2. In Discussion- While giving reason for difference between two blood banks authors clarify that the low prevalence in blood bank I is due to high socioeconomic group and high prevalence in blood bank II is due to low socioeconomic status. Why then incidence is increasing in blood bank I and decreasing in blood bank II.

3. Authors should discuss about the occult HBV infection which may be missed by just doing HBsAg. Role of ALT, Anti-HBc and HBV DNA in detecting such patients and the prevalence of occult HBV infection amongst healthy blood donors should be mentioned.

4. Discussion can be shortened.

-- Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore) --

What next?: Unable to decide on acceptance or rejection until the authors have responded to the major compulsory revisions
**Level of interest:** An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

**Statistical review:** Yes

**Declaration of competing interests:**

'I declare that I have no competing interests'