Author’s response to reviews

Title: Hcv Infected Prisoners: should they be still considered a difficult to treat population?

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Author's response to reviews: see over
RE: Manuscript 3046278579132173 - HCV Infected Prisoners: should they be still considered a difficult to treat population?

To Editorial Team,

We found the comments and suggestions from the reviewers very useful and we modified the manuscript accordingly.

In particular, Reviewer Robert Striker:

Major compulsory revisions
“Also please add the median length of stay for those …”
We agree with the comment and we have clarified that the median length of incarceration for these patients is not available and that 9.5 months is the overall median length of stay for the 5 facilities. Moreover we have commented on how short a treatment length needs to be order to treat inmates short stays.

Minor essential revisions
“Page 7: “Among the …”
According to the reviewer’s suggestion, we have provided to rectified on page 7: “...no eligible” with ineligible.

Discretionary Revisions
“Page 8: mentions “active …”
We were probably not clear about this point. We don’t believe that active drug substance abuse is a barrier to care in prison but it has a negative impact on adherence especially if active IVDUs are not in rehabilitation or stable maintenance agonist therapy.

Reviewer Edward Feller:

Major compulsory revisions
“only 2 references (2011- 2012) are …”
We agree with comment on much current, relevant literature and we have updated the bibliography with more recent references as suggested.
“… modify sentence in Background, 4th paragraph…”
We agree with the comment and we have modified sentence in Background: “Few data are available…in correctional population in Europe” in 4th paragraph.
“Mention and inclusion of more current…”
According to the reviewer’s suggestion we have mentioned and included more current references for treatment, including potential for improved treatment by newer direct acting agents.
“References # 12 and # 13 are essentially…”
We have deleted references 12 and we have included in bibliography a current reference for HCV treatment that updates reference 13
“Results and discussion, paragraph beginning with, “ Despite …”
According to reviewer’s suggestion we have modified the paragraph beginning with “ Despite advances in treatment…” focusing on incarcerated populations, clarifying the question on untreated patients and including in bibliography references on this issue.
“Methods, 1st paragraph…”
We agree with the comment and in paragraph on study limitations we have clarified that certainly there is a significant bias selection and that we have evaluated only 159 inmates for which the correctional physician requested a specialist consultation at our Institute, and a population of patients more suitable to treatment could have been selected.

Minor essential revisions
Figure 1, algorithm. “Excluded …”
According to reviewer’s suggestion we have included a brief mention of guidelines for HCV screening and treatment in IVDUs.

Minor issues not for publication
We edited manuscript for typographical and grammatical errors.