Reviewer's report

Title: Messenger RNA levels of podocyte-associated proteins in subjects with different degrees of glucose tolerance with or without nephropathy

Version: 1 Date: 5 September 2013

Reviewer: Cheuk Chun Szeto

Reviewer's report:

This is a cross sectional study on the mRNA expression of podocyte-associated molecules in urinary sediment of diabetic and pre-diabetic patients. The sample size is reasonable, laboratory methods appropriate.

Major comment:
- The diabetic group seems very heterogeneous. Please provide some information about the duration of diabetes, prevalence of other complications (e.g. retinopathy), and current treatment. It may be worthwhile to divide these patients into two groups: newly diagnosed diabetes with no complication, versus long-standing diabetes with complications (as presented in Table 2).
- I am not sure about the value of Poison regression (Table 3) and ROC curve (Figure 2). The real value of the result is the finding of elevated urinary podocyte associated molecule mRNA even in pre-diabetic patients, indicated early onset podocyte dysfunction. This point should be emphasized. It seems unlikely to use urinary mRNA as the diagnostic tool for albuminuria.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests.