Reviewer's report

Title: Reduction in Podocyte Density as a Pathologic Feature in Early Diabetic Nephropathy in Rodents: Prevention of by Lipoic Acid Treatment

Version: 1 Date: 21 September 2005

Reviewer: Frederick R DeRubertis

Reviewer's report:

General

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

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

Minor Essential Revision

1) Insulin treatment did not uniformly prevent the modest effects of diabetes on podocyte number or GVP shown in Figures 4 and 5. This at least leaves open the possibility that renal injury induced by streptozotocin per se, which also may be mediated by reactive oxygen species, contributed to the differences in these parameters observed in diabetic vs control rats. The authors should explicitly address this possibility in the Discussion.

2) The transmitted reproduction of Figure 1 does not clearly demonstrate any differences in glomerular GLEPP1 staining between control and diabetic. A better example should be provided for publication.

3) The only significant difference between control and diabetics shown in Figure 3 is in GVP at 2 weeks. This difference should be simply stated in the narrative Results and Figure 3 deleted.

Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

Which journal?: Not appropriate for BMC Medicine: an article whose findings are important to those with closely related interests and more suited to BMC Nephrology

What next?: Offer publication in BMC Nephrology after minor essential revisions

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests.