Reviewer's report

Title: MicroRNA-1269 promotes proliferation in human hepatocellular carcinoma via post-transcriptional downregulation of FOXO1

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Reviewer: Pietro Di Fazio

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The manuscript of Xuei Wei Yang et al. clarifies the role exerted by miR-1296 in HCC model and in patients. However, the manuscript needs some improvement in order to clearly explain the mechanism acted by this miRNA in liver cancer.

Major Compulsory Revisions
1. The authors should indicate in the Methods section, which reference miRNA was used as control for qRT-PCR.

2. In the Results section, FOXO1 paragraph, the authors should analyse the expression of the phosphorylated form of FOXO1, in order to confirm the block of its synthesis operated by miR-1296.

3. RB transcript level must be shown.

4. It is not clear whether Cyclin D1 is down-regulated after miR-1296 inhibition. The authors should clarify this effect.

Minor essential Revisions

The authors should mention other additional scientific papers that elucidate the role of miRNAs in HCC (see also The pan-deacetylase inhibitor panobinostat suppresses the expression of oncogenic miRNAs in hepatocellular carcinoma cell lines. Henrici A, Montalbano R, Neureiter D, Krause M, Stiewe T, Slater EP, Quint K, Ocker M, Di Fazio P. Mol Carcinog. 2013 Dec 23; Downregulation of HMGA2 by the pan-deacetylase inhibitor panobinostat is dependent on hsa-let-7b expression in liver cancer cell lines. Di Fazio P, Montalbano R, Neureiter D, Alinger B, Schmidt A, Merkel AL, Quint K, Ocker M. Exp Cell Res. 2012 Sep 10;318(15):1832-43

Discretionary Revisions

FOXO1 detection in subcellular compartments (nucleus and cytosol) would be a clear statement of its blockage and absent activity as inversely correlated with miR-1296.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field
Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being published

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

Declaration of competing interests:
I declare that I have no competing interests