Reviewer’s report

Title: Role of Lifestyle Changes in the Management of Chronic Liver Disease

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Reviewer: David van der Poorten

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Nobili et al write here on the role of lifestyle change in chronic liver disease, yet the review is somewhat sparse and could be significantly improved by more detail and referencing of their core topic

MAJOR COMPULSORY REVISIONS:

The spelling and grammar used throughout need to be improved. This manuscript needs to be carefully edited by a native English speaker to make it tighter, more scientific and easier to follow.

1. (Page 3 - para 1) There is significant evidence detailing the close association between obesity and disease progression and disease severity in NAFLD, but the authors fail to discuss any of this. They should go over some of the evidence briefly that has shown IR, extent of steatosis, extent of visceral fat and extent of obesity is associated with worse outcome and more severe disease.

2. (Page 4 - para 2) Need to detail the evidence that obesity is associated with advanced NAFLD in pediatric polulation such as biopsy studies on obese children where a number are already cirrhotic. Also the focus on “parents” driving lifestyle intervention suggests physicians do not share this interest. This should be reworded.

3. (Page 5 para 2) Following the discussion of how obesity worsens HCV there should be a discussion of the studies that have looked at lifestyle interventions in the absence of treatment. The authors state at the end of this para “several studies have examined the effect of weight loss…. And then go on to cite only one paper. They should cite the work by Hickman et al from Gut 2004 (Hickman, I. J., J. R. Jonsson, et al. (2004). "Modest weight loss and physical activity in overweight patients with chronic liver disease results in sustained improvements in alanine aminotransferase, fasting insulin, and quality of life." Gut 53(3): 413-419.) in addition to the paper they mention. Another useful reference thus far presented in abstract form is as follows: Pattullo, V., G. S. Fernandes, et al. (2010). "A 24-week dietary and physical activity intervention leads to sustained improvements in body mass index and insulin resistance in the obese with insulin resistant chronic hepatitis C." Hepatology 52(S1): 690A.

A separate paragraph could then describe the effect of obesity and IR on treatment outcome and attempts made to modify factors such as the pioglitazone study. They should also report the following study which showed a positive

The authors should report on current trials that are underway through NIH in the same vein. Thereafter they could state that given lifestyle interventions do appear to be effective in HCV that they may be the most viable option.

MINOR ESSENTIAL REVISIONS

1. NAFLD: The following study should be added to table 1 and discussed.


2. Liver transplant: Authors should state if any NIH or other studies currently underway to look at diet or lifestyle change post liver transplant. It would seem extraordinary that are not any, even if yet to be published.

3. Suggest discussing briefly the evidence for improvement in NAFLD with bariatric surgery as evidence for the benefits of weight loss. This is some part also gives a basis for trying to achieve these changes in a non-invasive way.

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