Reviewer's report

Title: Hepatic stellate cells: central modulators of hepatic carcinogenesis

Version: 2 Date: 6 April 2015

Reviewer: Shannon Glaser

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Minor Essential Revisions:

1. The review “Hepatic stellate cells: central modulators of hepatic carcinogenesis” by Thompson, et. al. does cover an area of importance in the field covered by the journal.

2. The review presents a comprehensive, authoritative review of existing work on the role that HSCs play in the progression of hepatocellular carcinoma (HCC), specifically the key components produced by HSCs that modulate HCC tumor formation and how these pathways may be targeted as new therapeutic options for the treatment of HCC.

Other comments:

In Lines 54-57 the authors mention that chronic Hepatitis B infection is one of the major risk factors for HCC. Then, in the next sentence in Lines 57 and 58 they mention that “In most countries, the mortality rate approximates the incidence, which is increasing”. It is not clear whether the authors are referring to the mortality rate of HCC or the mortality rate of Hepatitis B in this sentence, so that should be clarified.

In line 415 the references in the brackets should be combined [119-121] instead of [119] [120] [121].

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.