Reviewer's report

Title: Elevated D-dimer is Associated with Increased 28-day Mortality in Acute-on-Chronic Liver Failure in China: a Retrospective Study

Version: 1 Date: 22 May 2018

Reviewer: Jun Chen

Reviewer's report:

In this manuscript, Jinjun Chen et al. revealed a nonlinear relation between D-dimer level and 28-day mortality with a turning point at 6.5 mg/L FEU in ACLF. Statistically, they calculated odds ratios of D-dimer level for risk of 28-day mortality by logistic regression analysis with non-adjusted and multivariate-adjusted models. They demonstrated that D-dimer was associated with short-term prognosis. In my opinion, this article offers a quotable experience in predicting short-term prognosis in ACLF patients. However, there are some minor deficiencies.

1. The authors mentioned that D-dimer levels positively correlated with all conventional prognostic predictive scores (MELD, MELD-Na, CLIF-OF, CLIF-C Ads, CLIF-C ACLFs), but not explored and compared the value of the latter's in predicting prognosis of ACLF patients.

2. In this single-center retrospective study, it's special that the vast majority of the ACLF patients had HBV related chronic liver disease, other than NASH, HCV, and other liver disease in West. It is appropriate to highlight "in China" in the title and abstract, which is conducive to understanding of global readers.

3. The cut-off value of D-dimer level (6.5 mg/L FEU) was identified as the turning point of the adjusted smoothed plots in Figure.3. So, marking out the precise location of the turning point would be appropriate. In addition, the authors compared the clinical data of the patients with less D-dimer lever and high D-dimer lever in Table.1. they should illustrate how to group all patients in the beginning of the Results.
Are the methods appropriate and well described?
If not, please specify what is required in your comments to the authors.

Yes

Does the work include the necessary controls?
If not, please specify which controls are required in your comments to the authors.

Unable to assess

Are the conclusions drawn adequately supported by the data shown?
If not, please explain in your comments to the authors.

Yes

Are you able to assess any statistics in the manuscript or would you recommend an additional statistical review?
If an additional statistical review is recommended, please specify what aspects require further assessment in your comments to the editors.

I recommend additional statistical review

Quality of written English
Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

Needs some language corrections before being published

Declaration of competing interests
Please complete a declaration of competing interests, considering the following questions:

1. Have you in the past five years received reimbursements, fees, funding, or salary from an organisation that may in any way gain or lose financially from the publication of this manuscript, either now or in the future?

2. Do you hold any stocks or shares in an organisation that may in any way gain or lose financially from the publication of this manuscript, either now or in the future?

3. Do you hold or are you currently applying for any patents relating to the content of the manuscript?

4. Have you received reimbursements, fees, funding, or salary from an organization that holds or has applied for patents relating to the content of the manuscript?

5. Do you have any other financial competing interests?

6. Do you have any non-financial competing interests in relation to this paper?
If you can answer no to all of the above, write 'I declare that I have no competing interests' below. If your reply is yes to any, please give details below.

I declare that I have no competing interests.

I agree to the open peer review policy of the journal. I understand that my name will be included on my report to the authors and, if the manuscript is accepted for publication, my named report including any attachments I upload will be posted on the website along with the authors' responses. I agree for my report to be made available under an Open Access Creative Commons CC-BY license (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/). I understand that any comments which I do not wish to be included in my named report can be included as confidential comments to the editors, which will not be published.

I agree to the open peer review policy of the journal.