Reviewer’s report

Title: Sustained serological and complete responses in HBeAg-Positive Patients treated with Peginterferon alfa-2b: a 6-Year Long-Term Follow-Up of a Multicenter, Randomized, Controlled Trial in China

Version: 1 Date: 11 Feb 2018

Reviewer: Florian MAYER

Reviewer's report:

Major points:

1) The "long-term follow up" should be explained in more detail. You are mixing the methods of the original study ("Peginterferon alfa-2b in the treatment of Chinese patients with HBeAg-positive chronic hepatitis B: a randomized trial") with the methods of your follow up study. The authors need to clarify and outline which of the study investigations were solely carried out for the "long-term follow up" and those which belong to the original study.

2) Did you obtain an approval of your local ethics committee for your long-term follow study, and if so, did all patients give written and informed consent for both the original (48 weeks) as well as the 6 year follow up study? Please clarify and state in the method section whether you obtained the above mentioned agreements.

Minor points:

1) This belongs to the method section: 3.3; Line 1-10: "We used univariate and multivariate Cox regression analysis to analyze factors associated with SR and CR (Table 3). Factors with p<0.05 in univariate analysis were included in the multivariate analysis" AND 3.1, Line 6.: and were requested to participate in long-term follow-up by returning for an onsite visit.

2) Your endpoint is the sustained combined response and the sustained serological response after 6 years. You do not provide any data regarding the median follow-up (I highly doubt that all patients were investigated EXACTLY after 6 years).

3) Table 2. What kind of statistical test did you use for the determination of the p-value?

4) Table 3. This table doesn't make any sense. What are you trying to present here? Do you want to show which variables you included in your stepwise model? If so, simply show which variables you included in the final model. Or do you want to show the difference between the PEG-IFN dosing schemes after 6 years?

Are the methods appropriate and well described?
If not, please specify what is required in your comments to the authors.

No

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

No

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

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