Author’s response to reviews

Title: Hepatitis B/C in the countries of the EU/EEA: a systematic review of the prevalence among at-risk groups

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Reply to reviewer comments Jan 2018:

Dear Editor,

We have amended and added detailed of the study as suggested by the editor and reviewers. We list how we addressed each point below.

1. The reviewer asked about updating the search given that the search was completed in March 2015 (nearly 2.5 years ago). Although it is understandable that conducting a review of this scale is time consuming, the search being 2.5 year old is still a limitation for this study. The authors are suggested to include this study limitation in the Discussion section.

- We have added in some text into the limitations paragraph on p.13. to reflect this valid limitation.
2. As per both reviewers’ suggestion, the authors are suggested to include the study flow chart in the main paper rather than appendix materials.

- This has been added in and a reference made to it in the methods section.

3. The authors mentioned that “only data on HIV negative MSM were extracted”. It means that all the prevalence estimates reported in this study are among “HIV negative MSM” not general MSM. It is an important issue. The authors are recommended to revise the text at least in abstract, subheadings of the Results section and figure legends to change “MSM” to “HIV negative MSM”. It is particularly important, given that HIV positive MSM are generally considered to be at the greater risk of HCV infection.

- We looked back at our protocol and have amended the classification of MSM included in this study to reflect more accurately what we did. We extracted data on HIV negative MSM or among MSM whose HIV sero-status was unmeasured or unknown. We have added in this distinction into all the sections as suggested.

4. Figure 4: It is not clear what “N=N/R” (in Spain data) is referring to.

- This refers to Not Reported. This detail has been added into the legend for Figure 4 for clarity.