Author’s response to reviews

Title: Molecular epidemiology of hepatitis B virus infection in Norway

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Version: 3 Date: 26 Feb 2019

Author’s response to reviews:

Response letter regarding manuscript "Molecular epidemiology of hepatitis B virus infection in Norway" (INFD-D-18-02058)

Dear editor Yi-Hua Zhou,

We have revised the manuscript accordingly and made a point-by-point response:

Editor Comments:

1. Please include the email addresses for all authors on the title page. The corresponding author should still be indicated.

- Email addresses for all authors have been added to the title page.
2. Please include your keywords below your abstract and above the main text of your manuscript.

- This has been changed.

3. Please change the section heading “Introduction” to “Background”.

- Corrected.

4. As many abbreviations are used throughout the paper, we ask that you include a list of abbreviations (before the declarations section) for reference and ease of reading. All abbreviations should still be defined in the text at first use.

- A list of abbreviations has been added before the declarations section.

5. If consent to participate was not required, please provide details of why this was waived and the institution/committee that approved the waiver in the “Ethics approval and consent to participate” section of the Declarations.

- This section now reads in full:

The study was approved by the Regional committee for medical and health research ethics (REC) South East, Norway (Approval number: 2009/849) with a dispensation from consent from participants as (a) it is difficult to get consent from this patients group (migrants, drug users), (b) the data was already available in the notification system and the lab analysis was performed prior to the start of the study, (c) some samples are old why it will be very hard to trace the patients, (d) any patient contact was made between the patient and the responsible medical doctor who sent inn samples for genotyping analysis before the project started. Personal identification was only needed to link origin and route of infection to the sequence. Linkage between patient data
was only made temporarily whereafter all data, and subsequently all publicly available data, was anonymised.

6. Please amend the statement in the "Consent for publication" section, as this refers to consent obtained to publish potentially-identifying information (of patients/participants). If your manuscript does not contain any individual person’s identifiable data or information, please state “Not applicable” under this section.

- This has been changed to only read “Not applicable”.

7. At this stage, please upload your manuscript as a single, final, clean version that does not contain any tracked changes, comments, highlights, strikethroughs or text in different colours. All relevant tables/figures/additional files should also be clean versions. Figures (and additional files) should remain uploaded as separate files.

- All files are uploaded as clean versions.

Yours sincerely,
John Pettersson, on behalf of all authors.

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