Reviewer’s report

Title: Association between epidermal growth factor gene +61A/G polymorphism and the risk of hepatocellular carcinoma: a meta-analysis based on 16 studies

Version: 2 Date: 20 January 2015

Reviewer: Miroslav Blumenberg

Reviewer’s report:

In the manuscript “Association between epidermal...” Jiang et al. describe a meta-analysis of multiple studies connecting EGF polymorphism to HCC. They used a wide net approach and, after careful selection of appropriate studies, ended up with 16 studies including 2475 HCC cases and 5381 controls, which allowed them to reach a valid conclusion about the association, with statistically significant values. The issue is important because the association was hypothesized previously, but with controversial conclusions. If confirmed, Jiang et al.’s result could point to EGF as a target for treatment.

The manuscript is well written, comprehensive.

Minor Essential Revision:

There is, however, one problem that the authors should address: it is difficult to slog through the numbers embedded in the text, e.g., lines 224 – 229 and 255 – 258 etc., these would be much easier to read and comprehend in tables. Either multiple small tables or a combined table with a) b) etc. would make the manuscript much clearer.

Level of interest: An article of outstanding merit and interest in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests.