

Article details: 2018-0024	
Title	<b>Canadian regulations and legal ramifications for hepatic encephalopathy: a descriptive analysis</b>
Authors	Henry H. Nguyen MD, Mark G. Swain MD MSc, Philip Wong MD MSc, Stephen E. Congly MD MSc
Reviewer 1	Michel Shamy
Institution	University of Ottawa, Medicine (Neurology), Ottawa, Ont.
General comments (author response in bold)	<p>This paper asks whether hepatic encephalopathy is considered a reportable condition for driving purposes in any Canadian jurisdiction, and finds that it isn't. It then asks whether there is any case law pertaining to physicians being held responsible for MVAs by patients with hepatic encephalopathy, and finds that there isn't. These are fine things to have identified. But the two conclusions are underdeveloped in relation to each other. Most of the discussion pertains to the findings of other studies, and the concluding paragraph makes assertions that were not tested in this paper. To my mind, this paper could make a valid contribution but needs major revision.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. It needs to be a whole lot shorter. Consider excising most of the discussion.</li> <li>2. Focus the discussion on what was actually investigated in this paper. Why is hepatic encephalopathy not reportable? Are there other similar conditions that are reportable? If there is no case law, why might that be?</li> <li>3. Please review how and when to use semicolons. They are used inappropriately throughout the paper in the place of commas.</li> </ol> <p><b>Thank you for your comments. The manuscript has been significantly modified including changes to the discussion focussing on our findings in the manuscript. With our changes, we have also referenced published guidance on dementia and delirium with driving and describe how hepatic encephalopathy does not fit under this category. The paper was reviewed again, and grammatical corrections were made including eliminating semicolons inadvertently used incorrectly.</b></p>
Reviewer 2	Abraham Rudnick
Institution	Department of Psychiatry and Behavioural Neurosciences, McMaster University, Hamilton, Ont.
General comments (author response in bold)	<p>This paper addresses an important topic, i.e., hepatic encephalopathy (HE) in relation to driving and related reporting. Unfortunately, a fundamental assumption of this paper is flawed, i.e., that a specific medical disorder such as HE is typically or has to be explicitly addressed in driving related legislation. This is not the case for other specific medical conditions, as implied by the authors' statement in the first paragraph of the Results section: "In regions where reporting was mandatory, terms including general debility, cognitive impairment and metabolic diseases were highlighted as reportable medical conditions". Note that these three conditions are not specific medical disorders but rather can be caused by various medical disorders. Hence the key finding that HE not required to be reported in driving related legislation in Canada is not just expected but also does not require such research.</p> <p>The study reported could be considerably improved if it added comparative research on other countries' driving related legislation, as if in other countries HE is specifically address, it may be important for Canadian legislation to consider that. In addition, a more general conceptual inquiry on the pros and cons of including such specific medical disorders in driving related and other relevant legislation would also considerably improve the paper.</p> <p>On a technical note, some of the references' style should be standardized, e.g., reference 14's title is all in capital letters, which should be changed.</p> <p><b>Thank you for your comments. Comments about driving related regulations in the US as well as the UK have been added to provide a more global overview about driving and hepatic encephalopathy.</b></p>

	<p><b>We acknowledge that not all medical disorders need to be explicitly identified in regulation and most legal codes will be very generic given the large multitude of diseases. We have included commentary about the CCMTA Medical Standards for Drivers, which many jurisdictions use to help standardize driving assessments nationally which does include a number of disorders explicitly and how guidance for hepatic encephalopathy is missing.</b></p> <p><b>We have fixed our references and standardized them to the CMAJ Open format.</b></p>
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