signalling, in regulating intestinal epithelial apoptosis in vivo have not previously been investigated.

**Aims** To assess susceptibility to intestinal apoptosis and the associated molecular changes in mice with germline deletions of three individual NFkB family members.

**Methods** Intestinal apoptosis was induced in male c-Rel-null, NFkB1-null and NFkB2-null mice and their wild-type (C57BL/6) counterparts by 8Gy γ-irradiation (n=6 per group). Apoptosis was assessed on a cell positional basis from H/E stained sections. The mRNA expression of 10 key apoptotic regulating genes in the small intestine and colon (TRAIL, Caspase12, BAK, FAS-L, FAS, p53, BCL2, BCL-XL, c-IAP2 and XIAP) was assessed by real time PCR (n=4 per group). Statistical comparisons were by ANOVA with Bonferroni post-hoc tests.

**Results** Basal small intestinal crypt apoptosis was significantly increased in NFkB2-null relative to C57BL/6 mice. In addition, small intestinal and colonic crypt apoptotic indices were both significantly increased (up to threefold) in NFkB1-null and NFkB2-null mice 4.5 h after 8Gy γ-irradiation relative to wild-type and c-Rel-null mice. Untreated NFkB1-null and NFkB2-null small intestine showed reduced mRNA expression of the anti-apoptotic genes BCL2, BCL-XL, c-IAP2 and XIAP. Following irradiation, NFkB1-null mouse showed significant increases in the mRNA of the pro-apoptotic genes TRAIL, Caspase12 (in both small intestine and colon) and BAK (small intestine only) compared to wild-type mice. Significant increases in the mRNA of the pro-apoptotic genes Caspase12 and FAS-L were also seen in irradiated NFkB2-null small intestine and colon relative to wild-type mice.

**Conclusion** c-Rel expression does not appear to regulate susceptibility to intestinal epithelial apoptosis in vivo. NFkB1 and NFkB2 deletion both caused increased susceptibility to intestinal apoptosis and this was associated with altered expression of TRAIL, Caspase12, BAK and FAS-L. These NFkB family members may therefore also regulate the susceptibility of intestinal epithelia to other consequences of DNA damage such as cancer.

**Competing interests** None declared.

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**OC-021** A NOVEL SUBSET OF FUNCTIONAL IL-10 SECRETING CD8 REGULATORY T CELLS INFILTRATE HUMAN HEPATOCellular CARCINOMA

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**Introduction** Tumour specific effector T-cells can be detected in the blood and tumours of patients with hepatocellular carcinoma but fail to mount effective immune responses. Attempts to amplify anti-tumour immune responses using immunotherapy show promise, but are hampered by the presence of suppressive regulatory T-cells (Tregs) that inhibit anti-tumour immune responses. Tregs are crucial in the maintenance of immune homeostasis and in the prevention of auto-reactive immune response but in the context of cancer they can suppress beneficial anti-tumour immunity leading to tumour progression. A novel subset of CD8 expressing Tregs has recently been described and we now report the presence of such cells in human hepatocellular carcinoma and define their functional and homing properties.

**Methods** Fresh tissue from hepatocellular carcinoma and matched distal non-involved tissue was obtained from patients undergoing liver resection or transplantation at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, Birmingham after informed consent. Liver-derived T-cells were isolated and phenotyped using multi-colour flow cytometry including intracellular cytokine staining. CD8+ Tregs were isolated using a Mo-Flow cell sorter for functional assays. Distribution of CD8+ Tregs was investigated by immunohistochemistry and immunofluorescence.

**Results** The percentage of CD8+ Tregs (defined as CD8+CD25+FoxP3+) infiltrating hepatocellular carcinoma tumours was significantly greater compared with matched non-involved liver. Tumour-derived CD8+ Treg isolated by Mo-Flow sorting suppressed alloreactive effector cells in vitro and secreted interleukin-10 (IL-10). In contrast T-cell interferon-γ (IFN-γ) production was decreased within the tumour compared with matched non-involved liver. The chemokine receptor CXCR3 which is involved in T-cell recruitment to the inflamed liver was highly expressed on tumour-derived CD8+ Tregs.

**Conclusion** A novel subset of functional IL-10 secreting CD8+ Tregs may suppress anti-tumour immunity in hepatocellular carcinoma.
Their expression of CXCR3 provides a potential mechanism for recruitment into the tumour environment.

Competing interests None declared.

**BASL plenary session**

**OC-022**

**EMBOLISATION OF INFLOW TO ALLOW SAFER LIVER RESECTION – IS MORE, BETTER?**

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**Introduction**

Portal vein embolisation (PVE) is now an established technique to increase the future liver volume/remnant (FLR) prior to liver resection. For those patients where hypertrophy is still considered insufficient complete uni-lateral embolisation incorporating both portal and hepatic artery embolisation (HAE) has been less frequently reported. The aim of this study was to evaluate the feasibility of sequential PV/HAE embolisation to increase the FLR prior to liver resection.

**Methods**

All HPB patients are discussed at a weekly MDT meeting to decide on appropriate management decisions including the necessity for FLR augmentation. PVE is performed by initially obtaining a portogram by percutaneous trans-hepatic puncture. Selective embolisation of the necessary portal veins are then performed using a combination of coils and glue etc. Embolisation of Segment 4 PV branches are performed on a selective basis. HAE embolisation is performed by mapping arterial inflow and selectively embolising the desired segments planned for resection while carefully preserving the FLR. The aim of this study was to evaluate the feasibility/safety of PVE with sequential HAE over a 5-year period (January 2006–May 2011).

**Results**

50 patients (M:F = 38:12) underwent a right PVE, 33 (66%) progressed to liver resection. Reasons for inoperability (34%) following PVE (n=17) were (1) Small FLR, (n=6) all underwent HAE (with five proceeding to resection) (2) extra-hepatic disease (n=7) (3) progression of hepatic disease (n=4). The median FLR of those who progressed to resection following PVE, by CT volumetry, was 384.5 cc (350–490), significantly more than those who did not 257 cc (110–280) p<0.03. HAE increased the FLR by a further 99.8 cc (range 80.5–150 cc). An R0 resection was achieved in 25 patients (76%), including 4/5 (80%) of sequential patients. Following PVE and sequential embolisation; 9/33 (27%) and 3/5 (60%) suffered serious complications (Claven-Dindo 3 or 4). There were six post operative deaths including 5/33 (15%) after PVE and 1 (20%) following sequential embolisation respectively.

**Conclusion**

PVE is an increasingly used technique to increase the FLR allowing a significant proportion of patients an R0 resection despite initially being considered inoperable. Nevertheless at least 20% of patients will also have progression of disease. Patients who do not achieve adequate hypertrophy can potentially have HAE embolisation to increase the FLR by a further 100 cc but perhaps at the expense of increasing post-operative complications.

Competing interests None declared.

**OC-023**

**EXTRACORPOREAL LIVER SUPPORT USING UCL-ARSENEL REDUCES INFLAMMATION, IMPROVES HAEMODYNAMIC FUNCTION AND INCREASE SURVIVAL TIME IN A PORCINE PARACETAMOL-INDUCED ACUTE LIVER FAILURE MODEL**

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**Introduction**

Though the incidence of liver disease continues to increase, an effective liver support device remains an unmet clinical need. We have demonstrated that in liver failure, albumin function is irreversibly damaged, preventing detoxification processes, and that bacterial endotoxins induce systemic inflammation and neutrophil dysfunction. To date, toxin removal devices have failed to demonstrate clinical efficacy, which may be due to an inability to address albumin damage and/or inflammation. An albumin replacement system with a novel endotoxin ligation (ARSeNEL) component was developed to selectively to adsorb endotoxin and replace damaged albumin in patients’ plasma.

**Methods**

We tested the device in an acetonomophen model of acute liver failure (ALF). 16 female landrace pigs (eight ALF five ALF UCL-ARSeNEL) were studied. Irreversible ALF was induced by acetaminophen administration via a jejunal catheter, confirmed by deranged clotting function (PT >50% normal). Treatment was with UCL-ARSeNEL or CVVH control within 2 h of ALF confirmation. The ARSeNEL device consists of three components; plasmapheresis, endotoxin and high cut-off (100 kDa) filters; with fresh frozen plasma replacing ultrafiltered plasma. Endpoints were: survival; ICP; haemodynamic parameters, standard biochemistry; cytokines; albumin damage; and plasma endotoxin levels.

**Results**

UCL-ARSeNEL significantly increased survival past ALF (ALF 15.8±2.4 h vs UCL-ARSeNEL 23.8±1.9 h; p=0.02). Endotoxin reduced by a quarter (1.99±0.18 Eu/ml vs 1.42±0.21 Eu/ml) in the device group at 16 h. The changes in ICP index (1.7±0.07 vs 1.4±1.58), INR (16.6±6.6 vs 6.8±0.5), ischaemia-modified albumin ratio (0.45±0.166 vs 0.35±0.108), noradrenaline requirement (61.1±15.4 vs 28.7±15.2 μg/Kg), and mean arterial pressure (71±7.6 vs 87±6.0 mm Hg) showed marked improvement in the UCL-ARSeNEL group. Measured inflammatory cytokines IL8, IL6, IL1b, TNFα and neutrophil activation (spontaneous burst p=0.03) were all found to be reduced in the ARSeNEL treated group compared with ALF control.

**Conclusion**

These results confirm that UCL-ARSeNEL improves survival in ALF by addressing key pathophysiological derangements such as albumin dysfunction and endotoxaemia; which impact upon systemic inflammation and end-organ function. The reduction in inflammation is associated with improved vascular function and reduced inotropic support requirements.

Competing interests None declared.

**OC-024**

**DEVELOPMENT AND VALIDATION OF A NOVEL CAPTURE-FUSION MODEL FOR HCV REPLICATION**

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**Introduction**

HCV replicates poorly in vitro, so testing of novel antiviral therapies currently relies on modified viral replicons, based on genotype (G)1, or the G2 JFH-1 virus. A model allowing patient virions to be cultured would facilitate drug discovery and allow direct sensitivity testing. Here we describe the development of a novel HCV replication assay, its validation using the antiviral agents alosipivir and telaprevir and its value in identifying responses to interferon and ribavirin.

**Methods**

CD14 (+) monocytes derived from patients with chronic HCV infection, or pre-stimulated THP-1 cells infected with serum filtrate G1 and G3 HCV infected donors, were fused with HuH7 cells and treated with antiviral agents at various concentrations. The fused cells were maintained in tissue culture for up to 5 days, before...