

Author's response to reviews

Title: Frequency and Circumstances of Placebo Use in Clinical Practice - a Systematic Review of Empirical Studies

Authors:

Margrit Fässler (faessler@ethik.uzh.ch)

Karin Meissner (karin.meissner@med.uni-muenchen.de)

Antonius Schneider (antonius.schneider@lrz.tum.de)

Klaus Linde (Klaus.Linde@lrz.tum.de)

Version: 2 **Date:** 29 January 2010

Author's response to reviews: see over

Dear Mick,

Thank you very much for your e-mail.

We altered the conclusions in the abstract of the manuscript from "Further research is *urgently* needed." to "Further research is needed."

We deleted *urgently* because it reflected the wish of us scientists wanting to bring forward the research field. We think that the current statement "Further research is needed" in the abstract is addressed at the end of the discussion of our paper:

"Researchers should consider not only to pilot test questionnaires in a limited number of persons, but also to systematically interview participants of the pilot study to check whether questions are really understood in the intended manner. Qualitative studies investigating in more detail the circumstances and motivations for placebo use or inadequate prescribing are of particular interest. Based on the available evidence we addressed the placebo issue almost exclusively from the perspectives of scientists and health care providers. Future studies should also investigate the perspectives of patients. ...

Relevant research on placebo might yield findings that could contribute to developing a more honest and efficient patient-provider relationship."

Best wishes,

Margrit

Margrit Fässler, MD
Research fellow
Institute of Biomedical Ethics
University of Zurich
Zollikerstrasse 115
CH-8008 Zürich
Switzerland
E-Mail: faessler@ethik.uzh.ch

Institute: 0041 (44) 634-8381 /80
Fax: 0041 (44) 634 8389