Author's response to reviews

Title: Variables with time-varying effects and the Cox model: Some statistical concepts illustrated with a prognostic factor study in breast cancer

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Author's response to reviews: see over
March 1, 2010

RE: Manuscript MS: 7034419723207197

Dear Editor,

We are delighted that you have found interest in our manuscript

Variables with time-varying effects and the Cox model:
Illustration with a prognostic factor study in cancer.

and that you anticipate acceptance of our revised manuscript.

Following your instructions, we have now revised the format of our manuscript which should now conform to the Journal style (see next page for details – we could not address all of your remarks).

Given the specific format of our manuscript, note however that we provide a single section called 'Methods and Results' (instead of two distinct sections). In a previous email, we discussed this issue with Ms Iratxe Puebla who accepted this slight adaptation. For your information, we have included this email next page.

Yours sincerely,

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Formatting changes to be made:
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Major revisions (we require the author to make these changes)

Author list: the list of authors in the manuscript should be written exactly as they are in the submission system, both in style and order. The preferred style is "First name Initial Last name" (e.g. Joe F Bloggs).

Done

Tables: tables should fit into an A4 page (maximum size 176mm x 230mm) and appear in portrait format.
If you cannot re-orientate the table to fit this size, please move it to the additional files. Tables in the additional files will be made available with the final manuscript upon publication but will not be included in the manuscript in situ. Please ensure that you update the text to cite additional files and include a legend in the additional files section.

Done: 2 of the tables (initially in landscape format) are now presented as additional files (word documents)

Table citations - please cite all tables in numerical order in the text. Table 5 has not been cited and table 6 is cited in the wrong position.

Done

Minor revisions (we can make these changes for you, although it will speed up publication of your manuscript if you do them while making the major changes above)

Title page - remove the text 'presented in part...'

Done

Text boxes - several pages include text surrounded by a box. Please remove these table elements and present the information as regular text.

Done. We used regular text as often as possible. However, we were not able to use regular text for the 2 following symbols: \( \hat{\beta} \) and \( \hat{\gamma} \) (included using the INSERTION MENU / Object / Equation). We do not want to use other symbols, as the symbol '^' is the symbol used in statistics to indicate estimates. Maybe you have another way to write these 2 symbols using regular text...

NOTE: We kept the symbols \( \hat{\beta} \) and \( \hat{\gamma} \) in the main manuscript + in the 2 additional files.

Authors contributions - please format as a paragraph.

Done

Tables - please remove the visible vertical lines from your tables

Done

Typography: Please take this opportunity to check your manuscript for any typographical errors and to make any final corrections or revisions. This is the final proofing stage for your manuscript, and you will not be able to make any changes after acceptance.

Done