Author's response to reviews

Title: Exploratory factor analysis of self-reported symptoms in a large, population-based military cohort

Authors:

Molly L Kelton (mollylou.kelton@gmail.com)
Cynthia A LeardMann (cynthia.leardmann@med.navy.mil)
Besa Smith (besa.smith@med.navy.mil)
Edward J Boyko (eboyko@u.washington.edu)
Tomoko I Hooper (thooper@usuhs.mil)
Gary D Gackstetter (gary.gackstetter@anser.org)
Paul D Bliese (paul.bliese@amedd.army.mil)
Charles W Hoge (charles.hoge@us.army.mil)
Tyler C Smith (tyler.c.smith@med.navy.mil)
Millennium Cohort Study Team (MilCo Study Team) (milcohortinfo@med.navy.mil)

Version: 4 Date: 24 September 2010

Author's response to reviews: see over
Melissa Norton, MD  
**Editor-in-Chief**  
*BMC Medical Research Methodology*

Dear Editor Norton,

Enclosed please find our manuscript, “Exploratory Factor Analysis of Self-Reported Symptoms in a Large, Population-Based Military Cohort.”

We appreciate the opportunity to submit a revised manuscript in order to address the final concerns of the reviewers. A revised version with Track Changes of the manuscript has been submitted. Our response to the reviewer’s comment (in bold) follows below:

**Reviewer 1:**

1) The authors have responded adequately to my comments with the exception of #6 (can location be determined and accounted for in the model or by using another statistical approach?). Perhaps they could indicate in the manuscript that deployment, etc are important factors and will be examined in future analyses.

The author raises a good point and we have added the following sentences to the discussion: “Furthermore, this analysis does not address potentially significant associations between exposure and demographic variables with factor structure. Future investigations will examine the relationship of deployment histories and other exposure variables with covariance structure and factor scores associated with the current model.”

Thank you for the opportunity to submit our paper for review. We appreciate your consideration.

Very Sincerely,

Cynthia LeardMann, MPH  
Senior Biostatistician  
DoD Center for Deployment Health Research  
Naval Health Research Center, San Diego, CA  
Phone: 619-553-7594  
Fax: 619-553-7601  
Email: cynthia.leardmann@med.navy.mil