Author's response to reviews

Title: Ongoing monitoring of data clustering in multicentre studies

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Author's response to reviews: see over
Dear Editor/Reviewer,

Attached please find a copy of our manuscript, “Ongoing monitoring of data clustering in multicenter studies”. We hope you will consider it as an original manuscript for publication in *BMC Medical Research Methodology*.

In this article, we describe quality assurance efforts aimed at reducing the effect of measurement error in a recent follow-up of participants in a large cluster-randomized controlled trial through periodic evaluation of intraclass correlation coefficients (ICCs), and show how such an approach can be generally applied for the ongoing monitoring of multicentre studies. We trust that our findings will be of interest to *BMC Medical Research Methodology*’s readership, as the mechanism we describe has wide applicability, not just to randomized controlled trials but to any study with multiple centres or with multiple observers in a single-centre study.

All authors have reviewed and approved the manuscript and take full responsibility for the manuscript. None of the authors have any conflicts of interest or financial disclosures to declare. None of the manuscript content has been previously published and there are no prior submissions with any overlapping information. The data used for the analyses presented in this manuscript have not been published previously. This manuscript is not and will not be submitted to any other journal while under consideration by *BMC Medical Research Methodology*.

This manuscript was originally submitted to *BMC Public Health*, but was determined to be out of scope for that journal. The manuscript submitted for consideration by *BMC Medical Research Methodology* has been modified from its original form to include a statement regarding the ethics approvals obtained for the study. This statement can be found at the end of the Methods section on page 5.

Thank you for handling our submission and for considering our manuscript. We look forward to hearing your response.

Sincerely,

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