Author’s response to reviews

Title: Identification of adults with symptoms suggestive of obstructive airway disease: Validation of a postal respiratory questionnaire.

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I would like to submit a new copy of the manuscript and enclose a point by point response to the reviewers comments

2. The following sentence has been added to the discussion paragraph 8 line 10

The majority of diagnostic decisions are made in primary care and we acknowledge that choosing three consultant respiratory physicians as the diagnostic gold standard therefore has limitations. They were however chosen to reflect a spread of secondary and tertiary respiratory opinions.

The following sentence has been added to the Method paragraph 2 line 4.
As this was a new scoring system, estimates of the expected prevalence of obstructive airways disease in each stratum had to be derived empirically from the researchers' clinical experience

Point 5a
The word consensus has been replaced throughout the manuscript with majority

Point 5b
We acknowledge that the questionnaire is validated to identify subjects likely to benefit from a trial of treatment for obstructive airways disease and accept that the prevalences may therefore be overestimates the following sentence has been added to the discussion paragraph 7 line 8

It should be noted that the prevalence of adults "meriting a trial of obstructive airways disease therapy" in our survey was calculated [5] to be 22% (95% CI 15.5-31.4). This may be an overestimate of the true prevalence of obstructive airways disease as it will include patients who would not benefit from a trial of treatment.

We are at present unable to answer the final comment in 5b about the number who were subsequently diagnosed as having obstructive airways disease as this is part of a current ongoing project.

Point 6 The title is changed to "Identification of adults with symptoms suggestive of obstructive airways disease: Validation of a postal respiratory questionnaire."