Author's response to reviews

Title: Changes in the pattern of service utilisation and health problems of women, men and various age groups following a destructive disaster: a matched cohort study with a pre-disaster assessment

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Author's response to reviews:

To the Editor of Biomed Central Family Practice
Dr Lolu da-Silva senior assistant Editor.

MS: 1851601601959456
Changes in the pattern of service utilisation and health problems of women, men and various age groups following a destructive disaster: a matched cohort study with a pre-disaster assessment. Rik JH Soeteman, C.Joris Yzermans, Peter Spreeuwenberg, Toine ALM Lagro-Janssen, Wil JHM van den Bosch and Jouke van der Zee.

June 16, 2008

Dear Editor,

Formatting changes of MS: 1851601601959456

Box 1 was changed into Table 1 and the subsequent table numbers were changed including the text.

Again, the ethical approval question was raised (see letter dr. Chrissie Kouremenou of September 17th, 2007). We wrote in our letter on October 2nd, 2007 three arguments why an ethical committee was not required in the Netherlands. Thus, we did not ad any further sentence then in the method section. We did not receive an answer on the subject then. Therefore, we assumed your agreement. However, now we will add the following sentence in the paper:

“Ethical approval for this study was not required according to Dutch law/WPR (Wet Persoons Registratie=Law Registration of Personal data), because no medical intervention was performed (just registration of symptoms/diagnoses),
and the medical data were anonymized before leaving practice.”

One question: what is meant by “all additional files should be mentioned in the text”? Under physical symptoms (page 11) we wrote “(not in table)”. This refers to the supplemental table 6B, being the second part of table 6. We did so, in order to prevent the presentation of another extensive table in the paper. If you don’t agree with this, we will have to combine table 6 and 6b.

Kindest regards,

JH Soeteman

CJ Yzermans