Author's response to reviews

Title: The influences of childlessness on the psychological well-being and social network of the oldest old

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Author's response to reviews: see over
Dear Sir/Madam,

Please find enclosed the manuscript: “The influences of childlessness on the psychological well-being and social network of the oldest old” by Josefin Vikström, Marie Bladh, Mats Hammar, Jan Marcusson, Ewa Wressle and Gunilla Sydsjö which we believe would be of interest to Your readers.

The study is meant to contribute to the knowledge of how childlessness influences the psychological well-being of men and women as they grow old. The study is based on data from the ELSA85 population study on 496 Swedish 85-yearold individuals.

Many of the previous studies on this topic have excluded those who are “elderly elderly” and those who live in institutions. The aim of our study is to investigate if these individuals, who are older and frailer than the individuals included in previous studies, suffer more from not having had children since they generally are more dependent on their close relatives for support and care.

We have received the associate editors’s comments and have adjusted the manuscript accordingly. Please view the list of changes made below. We hope that the manuscript now meets the requirements of Your journal.

Looking forward to Your decision concerning publication of the above mentioned manuscript.

Regards,

Ms Josefin Vikström

- Question: The authors indicate that no dummy variables were used in the logistic regression analyses. Could they explain in which format these variables were entered?
  - Response: These explanations have been added to the statistics section, page 11
- Question: Please consider to dichotomise health in the logistic regression analyses
  - Response: We have dicotomised health in the logistic regression analyses. The results of these analyses are now quite different from the earlier versions of this manuscript. As a result, there are quite a few changes in the results and discussion sections, all of which are marked red.
- Question: Convertible ORs
  - Response: This has been corrected.