Author's response to reviews

Title: The importance of social support in the associations between psychological distress and somatic health problems and socio-economic factors among older adults living at home: A cross sectional study

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

MS: 6225743015881825
Enclosed please find our revised manuscript, now entitled “The importance of social support in the associations between psychological distress and somatic health problems and socio-economic factors among older adults living at home: A cross sectional study”, originally submitted for consideration for publication in BMC Geriatrics.

We are grateful to the referees for the constructive comments and we have now revised the manuscript in light of the comments and additional editorial requirements. The language is edited by a native-English speaker with scientific expertise. Changes are marked in the paper with yellow ink.

This cover letter gives a point–by-point response to the concerns:

**Major Compulsory Revisions:**

1 Both reviewers pointed out the need for clarification of the *Introduction*.
   1-1 The same term is now used for the same concept as much as possible. The main terms are: psychological distress, somatic health problems measured by diagnoses and physical impairments and socio-economic factors.
   1-2 A conceptual model of the relationships of the variables, figure 1, is made and the relationships among the three hypotheses are clarified to strengthen the rationale of the study.

2 As requested by the reviewers the *method section* is restructured with separate paragraphs.
   2-1 Statistical Methods section now outlines analytic approaches. The PCA analyses with results are moved to the descriptions of measures and variables. Table 2 describing the PCA analyse is also removed since it was meant as a quality control for the measurements of the concepts of social support and psychological distress and not as results of the study. Information about the Norwegian Population Register is added.

2-3 Analyses for social support as a moderator
   We tried different statistical methods for analysing social support as a moderator with continuous and dichotomous versions of the variables involved. These methods gave no essential differences. In this last version of the paper we have chosen to publish the logistic regression analysis with interaction effects.
Minor Essential Revisions:

Corrections of the tables:

Table 1 Here we have done no changes because we mean that it is enlightening (especially in a Norwegian context) to tell how many that was invited to participate originally and how many that actually responded.

(Table 2 removed)

Table 2 (earlier 3) is about distribution. The total data for HSCL according to the three age groups are not missing, but not relevant since we do not discuss the subject of age groups further. Sample size n=** for Men and Women are added.

Table 4 (earlier 5) is clarified and modified also in notes following the table to ease the understanding. The notes also include an explanation for asterisks.

Reviewer 2 nr 7. We mean that it is outside the scope of this study to include older adults in institutions. In this context we are only dealing with non institutional residents.

The Discretionary Revisions pointed out are all corrected. The point 21 from reviewer 1 regarding SEM was debated and we agreed upon that it would be more sophisticated but the more traditional logistic regression is solid and was our choice this time.

The abstract is in accordance with the modifications above.

The co-authors of the manuscript are in agreement with the changes of the manuscript.

We thank you for reconsidering this manuscript and hope it still will be of interest and that the corrections are implemented to your satisfaction.

Yours sincerely,

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