Author's response to reviews

Title: Vitamin B6 deficiency and diseases in elderly people - a study in nursing homes

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

I refer to your mail of January 3rd, 2013. Changes in our manuscript “Vitamin B6 deficiency and diseases in elderly people – a study in nursing homes” have been performed according to your recommendations as far as possible.

1. “Elderly” has been replaced by “elderly people”.

2. A repetition of some of the main findings in the conclusion is common and inevitable. The first sentence has been shortened, but some repetition is necessary to understand the conclusion.

3. “Previous findings” refers to the paragraph above where the findings have been reported. As proposed by you, I have repeated the previous findings in the last paragraph.

4. (1) Figure 1 is a result and should not be moved to “Methods”. The method section describes the methods in the same way as the methods was written in the protocol and the “Results” reports the results (figure 1) when we had done what was written in the protocol. According to your proposal (3), I have given a summary description of the figure in the text, in the first paragraph of the result section and not in the method section. My opinion is that this description is redundant, because duplication of information in the text, tables and figures should be omitted. (2) The two sections in “Methods” have been combined and expanded with information about the collection of blood samples (4). The paragraph concerning data quality (5) in the discussion has been enlarged. Some data like MNA and Katz are validated questionnaires and some data have been given by the elderly people and their next of kin. This has been discussed in the enlarged “Strengths and limitation” section. The term “long-term residents” (6) has been rephrased.

5. The sentence has been rephrased.

6. Insignificant results must be mentioned in the text when these results were the primary aim of the study. “Significant” is not synonymous with “statistically significant”. No changes have been made.

7. The wording has been changed.

8. The “dot” has been removed.

9. The subtitle “Main findings” has been removed.

10. The cut-off level for p-PLP has been mentioned in the “Material and methods” and it is unnecessary to enlarge this section. But because we concluded that half of the patients had B6 deficiency, it is important to discuss and substantiate that the cut-off level is as correct as possible and according to accepted cut-off values. We want to keep the discussion of the cut-off level in the “Discussion”.

11. Changes have been made according to the suggestions.

12. The change has been performed.

13. The conclusion of the study must contain some repetition in order to understand the implications. The implications are never the stand alone conclusion of the study but more often a
new hypothesis. This study is a typical example. One conclusion was that half of the participants had B6 deficiency. The implication is that vitamin B6 should be recommended to all elderly people in nursing homes. This is a new hypothesis that deserves evaluation in a new study before scientifically proven to be effective.

14. All corrections were performed in the previous version.

Sincerely yours
On behalf of the authors

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