Author's response to reviews

Title: Prevalence of commonly prescribed medications potentially contributing to urinary symptoms in a cohort of older patients seeking care for incontinence

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Author's response to reviews:

We thank the Editor and reviewers for their re-assessment of our manuscript and helpful suggestions. A detailed response to each comment is outlined below. We feel the manuscript has been greatly enhanced by these modifications and hope it will now be suitable for publication in BMC Geriatrics.

Reviewer 1, MS: 2107259988185026
1. Comment: The last paragraph of introduction needs to be revised. The author did not mention they would explore the associational factors of the medication use.

Answer: The last paragraph of the introduction has been revised accordingly.

2. Comment: The second paragraph of the discussion section mentioned some failures of large epidemiological studies to detect the association between certain medications and urinary symptoms, and also discussed some possible reasons; however at the next paragraph, the authors still recommended observational population-based cohort studies. It is necessary to add more justifications for such a claim.

Answer: This is an excellent point and we thank the reviewer for pointing out this source of confusion. We have revised the discussion accordingly and have added three new references to justify our conclusions:


3. Comment: The study represents an attempt to address the association between certain medication and urinary symptoms from a clinical cohort, the method of which is different from the “large epidemiological studies”. To me, this is a unique contribution of this paper. However the authors did not mention and highlight it in discussion. Therefore, statements such as “Another explanation lies in the fact that well-functioning elderly individuals who participate in population-based surveys are poorly representative of the clinical cohort of geriatric patients seeking care for urinary symptoms” seem a bit off the right track.

Answer: This sentence has been removed.

4. Comment: One interesting point of the current paper is that the association between certain medication and urinary symptoms suggested by clinical trials and case-control study could not be confirmed at the observational studies. I would like to see more discussion on the issue from a methodological perspective.

Answer: Thank you for raising this opportunity for discussion. Indeed, there are a number of methodological challenges involved in designing rigorous research studies aimed at detecting causal associations between medication use and urinary symptoms. The second paragraph of the discussion has been completely rewritten to address these issues. We also reworded the secondary objectives of the study as seeking to investigate whether associations between medication use and symptom characteristics could be detected in this clinical cohort. Given the limitations of our cross-sectional study design aimed at determining the prevalence of medication use, it is unsurprising that causal associations could not be detected.

5. Comment: Section of “statistical analysis”, the second last sentence, “co morbidities” needs a hyphen.

Answer: This has been corrected.

6. Comment: I suggest the authors use the “associational factors” instead of “predictor” in the text because this study is based on cross-sectional data.

Answer: The term predictor has been replaced throughout the abstract and the body of the manuscript with the term “Factors associated with…” including the Title of Table 3.

Editorial comments, MS: 2107259988185026
1. Comment: After reading through your manuscript, we feel that the quality of written English needs to be improved before the manuscript can be considered further. We advise you to seek the assistance of a fluent English speaking colleague, or to have a professional editing service correct your language. Please ensure that particular attention is paid to the abstract.

Answer: The revised manuscript was corrected by a fluent English speaking
colleague.