Author's response to reviews

Title: Moraxella catarrhalis acquisition, airway inflammation and protease-antiprotease balance in chronic obstructive pulmonary disease

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The Editors
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We are delighted to hear that our manuscript has been accepted in principle. As suggested, we have revised the Abstract to fit the journal's guidelines. We are also happy to note that two of the reviewers had no further suggestions for revision. The third reviewer has suggested changing the title by substituting “chronic bronchitis” for “chronic obstructive pulmonary disease”. We understand the reasoning behind this suggestion and offer the following response.

Chronic bronchitis is one of the two forms of COPD, the other being emphysema. All the patients in our study had smoke-induced chronic bronchitis and 37 of 39 have COPD as per the GOLD criteria. In our study, two patients were in GOLD stage 0, all others were in stage 1 or higher. We have acknowledged in the Discussion section that all our patients had chronic bronchitis, and that our findings may not apply to patients with pure emphysema.

The longitudinal cohort study in which samples were collected and analyzed for this publication has been the basis of multiple publications in several peer-reviewed journals with the term “chronic obstructive pulmonary disease” in the title, and are cited in the present report (References 5, 11 and 12). In addition the most widely used term for the disorder in the literature is chronic obstructive pulmonary disease. Our preference is to use the term chronic obstructive pulmonary disease for consistency with our own previous work and for consistency with the literature. Therefore, we think that changing the title is unnecessary and would detract from the message that our report is trying to convey.

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