Author's response to reviews

Title: Validation of the Kidney Disease Quality of Life-Short Form: a cross-sectional study of a dialysis-targeted health measure in Singapore

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Author's response to reviews:

Dear Reviewers,

Thank you for your valuable comments.

We have addressed these comments as follows.

Reviewer 1:

1. It is interesting that the English version of KDQOL_SF was administered in a mostly English speaking population. However the authors do not indicate why the need to validate an English version in an English speaking group of dialysis patients from Singapore.

The Kidney Disease Quality Of Life-Short Form (KDQOL-SF TM) has been validated and is widely used as a measure of quality of life in dialysis patients in many countries, but not in Singapore. This is now included in the abstract in paragraph 1.

To date, the psychometric properties of the KDQOL-SFTM have not been evaluated and KDQOL-SFTM has not been validated in the Singapore population. This is included in the last paragraph in the background section of the manuscript.

English as a common language is only one of the factors (other factors can be culture, psychological perceptions etc) that may impact on validity and hence the need for validation of KDQOL in Singapore.
2. KDQOL-SF was self administered. However authors indicate that 41% of the study population had no formal education. The authors do not explain how dialysis patients without an education could read the KDQOL-SF.

Actually 41% of the participants had up to primary level of education (no formal education is deleted) as mentioned in Table 1b. Trained Nurses helped patients to complete the forms who had difficulty understanding parts of survey.

3. The information provided is very technical and not likely to be of general interest to the readership.

Yes. The information is technical. However, we submit that it is essential to use the appropriate technical methods to establish validity and reliability.

3. No new information is provided regarding the quality of life of dialysis patients:

QOL scores in patients from Singapore, may be different from other countries because of Singapore’s multiracial society and its socio-cultural context may perceive QOL aspects differently. But this direct comparison is not possible with the present data. Once KDQOL has been validated, further comparative research would be possible.

5. The information presented may be more appropriate for a journal specific to Quality of life.

We had sent this manuscript to Health and Quality of life Outcome journal and were directed to BMC Nephrology by their editorial team.

Needs some language correction.

We have tried necessary corrections before being published

Reviewer 2:

1. The content of the results is bit too much. The parts describing ‘Inpatient days, cause of kidney disease, and patients who were/were not in the hospital’ (mentioned in the last three paragraphs) may be deleted as they have not been
mentioned in the part of ‘Methods’ and were not directly related to the topic or aim of the study. If they are deleted then the related parts in the discussion should be deleted too.

The parts mentioned have been deleted. Reference no. 18 related to the diabetes topic has also been deleted.

2. In the 4th paragraph of ‘Results’, it is stated that men scored significantly higher than women on ‘Physical function’. The mean score difference was larger than expected Please make sure the calculation was correct. The mean for women 24.17 is replaced by 56.17

3. The website stated in Reference 2 cannot be found. This website is replaced by http://www.nrdo.gov.sg/uploadedFiles/NRDO/Publications/SRR%20Report%201999_2000.pdf

4. Table 1a: For Patients age below 40 years, 08.8 is replaced by 8.8

5. The percentage of patients who had received education up to primary level in Table 1b is 41.3% but the number is 37% in the results.

This is written as - About 41% of participants had up to primary level of education while 37% had received above primary to secondary level of education

6. There are some grammar mistakes in the manuscript.

These mistakes have been corrected.

7. The word DISCUSSION has been changed to Discussion similar to the other parts of the manuscript.

8. In Table, some questions have question marks, but some do not. All the question marks have been removed.

9. In Table 2, regarding the sentence, “You could not do activities as carefully as usual’ please add a space between the word ‘You and the word ‘could’ A space has been included.

10. There are some mistakes in the ‘References’ including spelling, title and Published year etc. Please perform correction. Corrections have been done.

11. Language corrections have been done.