Author's response to reviews

Title: The effect of gender, age, and geographical location on the incidence and prevalence of renal replacement therapy in Wales

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Author's response to reviews: see over
Dear Dr Phillips

Re: MS: 1776082852100880 - The effect of gender, age, and geographical location on the incidence and prevalence of renal replacement therapy in Wales

Thank you for the reviewers’ comments you emailed to us on 5 October 2006. A number of changes have been made in response to the reviewer’s comments as outlined below.

Reviewer’s Comments

I am not sure that the authors explicitly state the rationale for undertaking the study in an era of full coverage of Wales by the UK Renal Registry.

Authors Response

Additional information on the rationale has been provided in the Background section of the paper.

There were also local concerns regarding some of the underlying population denominators used to generate the rates provided in the 2004 Renal Registry Report, which we would not wish to raise in the paper. For example, Chapter 2, p3, Table 2:1 “Centres in the 2004 Registry Report” gives population denominators for the five centres in Wales as: Bangor 0.18m, Cardiff 1.3m, Clwyd 0.15m, Swansea 0.7m and Wrexham 0.32m. However, this adds up to a population for Wales of only 2.65 million. In contrast, the 2003 report gives a population for Wales of 2,933,400 (p176). Similarly, the 2002 report gives Wrexham a population of 0.42m (p 27, 28), which differs for the population given in 2004, of 0.32m. There was some concern that the missing population was around mid-Wales and that this had resulted, for example, in Powys having a low rate (63pmp) for transplantation (2004).

Reviewer’s Comments

Much of the background section is taken up discussing the benefit of age specific prevalence rates.
Authors Response

This has been reduced somewhat and supplemented by references.

Reviewer’s Comments

There could have been more focus on gaps in epidemiological knowledge of RRT in UK and Wales in particular … The authors … do not seem to be aware of conservative(non-dialytic) options for such patients.

Authors Response

This has now been addressed in two paragraphs in the Discussion section

I hope that our changes meet the reviewer’s concerns. Please let me know if you require any further changes to be made.

Kind regards,

Yours sincerely

Dr H van Woerden