Author’s response to reviews

Title: Caregiver burden in amyotrophic lateral sclerosis is more dependent on patients’ behavioral changes than physical disability: a comparative study.

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Author’s response to reviews: see over
Prof Amos Korczyn

BMC Neurology Editor

Dear Prof Amos Korczyn,

Re MS: 1931018777704573

Caregiver burden in amyotrophic lateral sclerosis is more dependent on patients' behavioral changes than physical disability: a comparative study.

Thank you very much for your correspondence from September 25th. We have done our best to address the reviewer’s last points, as outlined below.

This re-submission includes the response to the reviewers (attached below), manuscript, Table 1 and figures. The changes suggested by the reviewers are highlighted in yellow in the manuscript.

Please let us know if you require any further changes.

Yours sincerely,

Eneida Mioshi
Response to reviewers

Reviewer's report

Title: Caregiver burden in amyotrophic lateral sclerosis is more dependent on patients' behavioral changes than physical disability: a comparative study.

Reviewer: Ettore Beghi
Reviewer's report:
Major compulsory revision

The authors addressed my major query only in part. I may understand that to have a clear idea of the representativeness of the study population is difficult. However, the authors certainly know how many caregivers were contacted in the mail survey. Providing the proportion of responders would give us a better idea of the representativeness of the sample.

Response: The authors were unable to know how many caregivers were effectively contacted because the invitation to participate in the survey was strictly managed by the MND Association of Australia and the authors did not have direct contact with the caregivers until they sent the signed consent to participate. Nevertheless, in order to clarify this point, the total number of members registered in the MND association of NSW has been included and the information has been complemented in the methods and participants section (highlighted in yellow).

This point along with the characteristics of the ALS population (in comparison with the general ALS population) should be discussed because the implications of the authors' findings are strictly dependent on the representativeness of the interviewees' and patients' sample.

Response: The age range and pattern of onset (limb vs. bulbar) mirrors closely that found in large cohorts (Logroscino, Traynor et al. 2010; Gundersen, Yaseen et al. 2011; Huisman, de Jong et al. 2011). This explanation has been added in the demographics of the results section, as well as the discussion.

Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being published

Response: We have made a number of changes in the manuscript (highlighted in yellow) which we hope will be satisfactory to the reviewer.