Author's response to reviews

Title: A cost-effectiveness analysis of a preventive exercise program for patients with advanced head and neck cancer treated with concomitant chemo-radiotherapy

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Author's response to reviews: see over
Comments from the Editorial Board:

Title: A cost-effectiveness analysis of a preventive exercise program for patients with advanced head and neck cancer treated with concomitant chemo-radiotherapy

Version: 2 Date: 10 October 2011

1. The perspective of economic evaluation is different between the abstract and the text. In the materials and method section, authors mentioned “the analysis was performed from the health care system” (P7 L23-24). Since in this analysis only direct costs were used, it was payers’ perspective.

Answer to the reviewer:

The reviewer is correct, this was a mistake. We corrected this in the abstract into “health care perspective”

Changes in the text (abstract):

This study presents cost-effectiveness analyses of a preventive (swallowing) exercise program (PREP) compared to usual care (UC) from a health care perspective.

2. Subjects of this analysis were patients who had advanced head and neck cancer. However, the model was contracted with three health status including “no cancer” (P7 L13-14), and I am not convinced it was corrected.

Answer to the reviewer:

The reviewer is correct, this might not the right term for this health state. We changed it into “complete remission”, as we mean patients free of disease at the time of evaluation. With this change, we also would like to change the second health state in “recurrent disease” to be more consistent. And, in addition, we changed these terms in table 2.

Changes in the text:

The model was constructed with three mutually exclusive health states: “complete remission”, “recurrent disease” and “death” (death of cancer or other causes).