Author's response to reviews

Title: Return to work of breast cancer survivors: a systematic review of intervention studies

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Author's response to reviews: see over
Dear Dr. Edmunds,

We would like to submit a second revision of our revised manuscript “Return to work of breast cancer survivors: a systematic review of intervention studies” to your journal.

The first reviewer (John F Steiner) had no comments on our paper. The second reviewer (Marja-Liisa Lindbohm) had three minor points that we have addressed in our revised manuscript. We hereby give a point-by-point response to these three comments.

We hope that our reply is sufficient and thorough to meet your recommendation for publication. We look forward to your response.

On behalf of all the authors,

Yours sincerely,

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The authors’ responses are in italics after each reviewer comment.

1) Reviewer John F Steiner

This reviewers did not suggest any revisions.

2) Reviewer Marja-Liisa Lindbohm

Reviewer's report:
In general, the manuscript has improved substantially. The authors have answered my points. I suggest only a few minor revisions.

1. Page 9, lines 5-6: The authors write "return-to-work rates and sickness absence figures from more than two decades ago would likely be lower compared to today, as cancer related morbidity is lower and survival has significantly improved due to medical advances". Return-to-work rates may have been lower compared to today, but couldn't the sickness absence figures have been higher.

   We agree with the reviewer that sickness absence figures may have been higher in the past. The most important issue we wanted to highlight in this paragraph was that return to work was probably lower in the past. We therefore removed part of the sentence: “….. and sickness absence figures …..”. This now adequately reflects the reviewers comments and our own.

2. Table 1, column Number of subjects enrolled: This is indicated for other studies but is missing for the study of Winick et al.

   We have corrected this. The number of subjects enrolled in the Winnick study is N=863 women, but the number of working women is N=317. We have added this information, and limited the information to these two figures. In addition, we structured this information in a consistent way for all 4 studies.

3. Table 1, column Participants: Work status per cancer in the study of Sachs et al should be moved to column number of subjects enrolled like in other studies.

   We agree. This has been changed accordingly.