Author's response to reviews

Title: Retinal nerve fiber layer thickness and cognitive ability in older people: the Lothian Birth Cohort 1936 study

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Response to Reviewers

We would like to thank the reviewers for their helpful comments and suggestions. We have taken great care to address the points raised in this point-by-point response to the reviewers and have revised the manuscript accordingly. Many thanks once more for helping improve the quality of the final submission.

Reviewer 1:

This Ms was revised well as the reviewer suggested. I have no more concerns.

Reviewer 2:

There are two majors informations that should be added in the manuscript

We thank the reviewer for the comments and have made the necessary changes to the manuscript.

- In the methods: Patients with Mild Cognitive Impairment who may have modified retinal thickness have not been excluded from this study (Paquet et al 2007)

We agree with his statement but feel that it may be better placed in the Discussion section, hence added the following statements to the manuscript to reflect the comment.

“In our study, we used the MMSE and relied on self-reporting by participants to exclude cognitive impairment and could have included those with mild cognitive impairment but with MMSE scores within the normal range. As shown by Paquet et al, subjects with mild cognitive impairment may have
modified retinal thickness [9].”

- in the abstract: When adjusting the results to cognitive reserve assessed by the years of education, no significant associations between the RNFL thickness and cognitive scores were found

We have added the following lines to the abstract section:

“When we considered the number of years of education as a covariate, we found no significant associations between the RNFL thickness and cognitive scores.”

Reviewer 3:

The article can be published in BMC Ophthalmology