Author's response to reviews

Title: What are the effects of having an illness or injury whilst deployed on post deployment mental health? A population based record linkage study of UK Army personnel who have served in Iraq or Afghanistan.

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Author's response to reviews: see over
Dear Catherine Olino

RE: MS:1144898193660105, What are the effects of having an illness or injury whilst deployed on post deployment mental health? A population based record linkage study of UK Army personnel who have served in Iraq or Afghanistan.

Many thanks for your email regarding the above manuscript.

We have addressed the concern expressed by one of the reviewers ‘that the illnesses experienced whilst on deployment may have been psychosomatic manifestations of the stress response’. Please see page 11, where we have inserted the following comment to acknowledge this limitation.

“The authors also acknowledge that the illnesses experienced whilst on deployment may have been psychosomatic manifestations of the stress response. If a physician believes an illness to be a psychosomatic, it may have been recorded as a psychiatric illness on OpEDAR, though it is appreciated that distinguishing physical illness from somatic symptoms caused by distress is challenging. However we believe this is unlikely to account for all the association between physical illness on deployment and post-deployment mental health problems observed here.”

We hope this sufficiently addresses the issue.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

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