Author's response to reviews

Title: Pain, not chronic disease, is associated with the recurrence of depressive and anxiety disorders

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Author's response to reviews: see over
Dear Alice Murray,

Thank you for the interest you have expressed in our manuscript entitled ‘Pain, not chronic disease, is associated with the recurrence of depressive and anxiety disorders’. We are pleased that you have invited us to respond.

Please find a point-by-point response to the editor’s comments in the text below. We hope that you find our updated manuscript acceptable for publication in its present form.

We look forward to your decision.

On behalf of the co-authors,

Yours sincerely,

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Editor’s comments:

The authors have responded well to the concerns of our reviewers. The associate editor appreciates the clear articulation of the inability of the data to distinguish temporarily between sub-threshold depressive symptoms and pain. The mediator represents the same underlying construct (depression) as the outcome variable, which undermines the novelty of the mediation model findings and makes it almost tautological (like height mediating the outcome of being tall, where tall is defined by a certain threshold). The Discussion does provide a useful clinical message, however, and is supported by the existing literature. Please add a brief sentence to the Discussion to acknowledge that the mediating variable measures the same construct as the outcome variable. This will allow the reader to decide whether they would conceptualize this as a true mediator without belaboring the point.

Re: We have now added to the Discussion section (page 13, line 24): “The mediating variable, depressive symptoms, may partly measure the same construct as the outcome variable”.

Editor’s request:

Post-review copyediting:

We recommend that you copyedit the paper to improve the style of written English.

Re: Our manuscript has been edited by a native speaker.