Author's response to reviews

Title: Association between physical and mental health-related quality of life and adverse outcomes; a retrospective cohort study of 5,272 Scottish adults

Authors:

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Version: 5 Date: 30 October 2014

Author's response to reviews: see over
Dear Jane

Manuscript Title: Association between physical and mental health-related quality of life and adverse outcomes; a retrospective cohort study of 5272 Scottish adults Zia Ul-Haq Daniel F Mackay and Jill P Pell

Thank you for forwarding the comments of reviewers. We have revised the manuscript to take account of these comments and we believe our manuscript is now much improved. Below is our point by point response to these comments.

Reviewer 2
Version: 4 Date: 24 October 2014
Reviewer: Chiara de Waure

Reviewer's report:
I thank the Authors of the paper for improving the article. Notwithstanding, I would like to bring the attention to few final pending points with. In the amended version, Authors stated that adiposity may be considered a mediator in the association between HRQoL and adverse outcomes. Correctly, they tested BMI for interaction and, following the evidence of no interaction, they considered the variable as a confounder in the Cox model. Anyway, in the discussion, Authors stated that HRQoL may influence lifestyles. Indeed, also the latter could act as a mediator and interaction should be tested before using them as adjusting variables.

RESPONSE
Thank you for this suggestion. We have now added the interaction with lifestyle behaviours to the manuscript;

Statistical analyses:
“We were interested in exploring whether sex, BMI or lifestyle behaviours could modify the relationship between HRQoL and outcomes, and thus influence the assessment of health outcomes and mortality by using HRQoL. Therefore we tested for statistical interactions between HRQoL summary scores and sex, BMI and lifestyle behaviours.”

Result para 3;
“There was no significant interaction between PCS quintile and either sex (p=0.968), BMI (p=0.059), smoking (p=0.069) or alcohol consumption (p=0.328) in relation to any of the adverse outcomes.”
Furthermore, I would point out that the reference to the collection of saliva and urine samples is still there in methods section but Authors did not specify which kind of information they got from them.

Response
This is now removed from the “data sources” section of the manuscript.

Finally, I believe that the sentence “Furthermore, one of the reasons of no significant association in MCS may be that SF-12 only detects the mental health wellbeing and not the severe mental disease” (in discussion) does not make a lot of sense if Authors relies on HRQoL as an indicator of health status able to address health aspects which are difficult to capture by objective measurements (such as a severe mental disease).

Response
This is now removed from the discussion of the manuscript.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field
Quality of written English: Acceptable
Statistical review: Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.
Declaration of competing interests:
I declare that I have no competing interests

Reviewer 3
Reviewer: Carlos Garcia Forero

Reviewer's report:
I am satisfied with the responses the authors provided, and I recommend this paper for publication

Response: Thank you very much.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field
Quality of written English: Acceptable
Statistical review: Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.
Declaration of competing interests:
i declare that I have no competing interests