Author's response to reviews

Title: Levels of diphtheria and tetanus specific IgG of Portuguese adult women, before and after vaccination with adult type Td. Duration of immunity following vaccination.

Authors:

Guilherme Goncalves (guilherme.casa@mail.telepac.pt)
Maria A Santos (luvet.santos@tvtele.pt)
Joao G Frade (fradejoao886@hotmail.pt)
Jose S Cunha (saraiva@huc.min-saude.pt)

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Dr Lolu da Silva
Assistant Editor, BMC-series journals

Guilherme Goncalves
Rua da Vilar 87 - 2o Dto
4465 - 360 S. Mamede Infesta
PORTUGAL
Tel.: +351 93 239 27 63
guilherme.casa@mail.telepac.pt

Dear Dr Lolu

Our manuscript 3849304951179298

Levels of diphtheria and tetanus specific IgG of Portuguese adult women, before and after vaccination with adult type Td. Duration of immunity following vaccination.
Guilherme Goncalves, Maria Augusta Santos, Joao Graca Frade, Jose Saraiva Cunha

has been peer reviewed.

This "cover letter" describes how changes were made, following your "instructions" "to submit your revised version". The letter also gives "... a point-by-point response to the concerns" raised by the reviewers:

Affiliation of Guilherme Goncalves: when most of this work and the writing of the first version of the paper was written, I was working temporarily at "Instituto Gulbenkian de Ciencia" as "visiting scientist". Meanwhile, I came back to my hometown and I am working in the Medical School "Instituto de Ciencias Biomedicas de Abel Salazar". That is the reason why I have included the double affiliation.

Reviewer - November 8, 2006
"All comments constitute: Minor Essential or Discretionary Revisions"

1. In the abstract, we have addressed the issues of wider boosting intervals, but we have not used terms close to "reluctance" that would suggest any emotional reasons which are not an issue in this case. The closest to "reluctance" would be the adverse reactions; but that issue was removed to comply with the "compulsory revision of the other reviewer.

2. As we wrote in the manuscript "This study aimed to evaluate the use of Td in Portuguese adult women under routine conditions" and, under routine conditions, vaccination of adults without vaccination records is recommended and the lack of such documents, though some of them had, in fact, received vaccines in the past; for those reasons we decided to include them in the study. There were no problems with statistical power and timing from vaccination to blood collection was clearly described in the "results" section.

3. We agree that "without an active system for collection of safety data it is difficult to address the ...
reactogenicity" issue; see the response to the concerns of the other author.

3. We agree that lab tests and statistical methods were adequate.

3. Ethical approval had been mentioned in the "acknowledgements" section, but we agree on the need to clearly describe it in the "methods" section, following the BMC PH rules. The written informed consent had already been clearly stated in the "methods" section.

4. As stated by the reviewer, we think that the data were "well presented". Of course that more detailed and complete tables would always be possible, but that would make the paper too long.

5. No comments were made.

6. We think that there is no need to make the title and/or the abstract longer. We believe they are already informative and clear.

Reviewer - February 16, 2007

Like we said to a similar comment of the first reviewer, we agree that the validity of data on adverse effects was limited. Nevertheless we though that it was important and might be useful for other researchers in the future; furthermore, we were extreme cautious and critical on the conclusions and we had made it very clear for the readers to judge it.

Meanwhile, this subject raised the main objection of the second reviewer, who did classify the issue as "Major Compulsory Revisions" and gave the clear advice "to remove it".

This way, we have removed this subject from all points in the previous manuscript version, where it had been addressed.

Tables and Figures
After reading through them again, we have made no changes.

We look forward to know about your decision on acceptance of the "revised version" we are now sending.

Yours faithfully

Guilherme Goncalves (on the behalf of the authors)