Author's response to reviews

Title: An evaluation of alcohol attendances to an inner city emergency department before and after the introduction of the UK Licensing Act 2003.

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Author's response to reviews: see over
RE: An evaluation of alcohol attendances to an inner city emergency department before and after the introduction of the UK Licensing Act 2003.

MS: 9581434751818353 Andrew J Durnford, James M Perry and Tommy J Perkins

Dear Dr Graham,

I am pleased to submit our most recent revised manuscript. We thank the reviewers Robert Patton and V Sivarajasingam for their reports. We have addressed the thoughtful comments of Robert Patton below.

Major Compulsory Revisions:
1. “You need to clarify exactly what is meant by inconsequential alcohol related attendances - In the methods section you state that documentation that the patient had been drinking prior to attendance was defined as alcohol related, however in your response to my previous comment you indicate that cases of inconsequential consumption were not included in the study - on what basis was such consumption defined? Is it the case that only in cases were drinking prior to attendance was deemed as related then this was recorded?........”.

An alcohol related attendance was defined in this study as per the methods, which the reviewer correctly notes above. In our previous covering letter we were unclear when we referred to inconsequential alcohol related attendances. We used the term in reference to alcohol related attendances that may have been missed by our study. We did not define or exclude inconsequential alcohol related attendances in our study.

2. We thank the reviewer for highlighting our factual error concerning the SIPS project. We have now correctly described and referenced the SIPS multi-centre RCT.

Minor essential revisions:
1. Again, we thank the reviewer for highlighting a formatting error and this has been corrected.

Discretionary revisions:
1. “It may be enlightening to include a proxy measure of alcohol related attendances, such as the number of assaults / violence presentations. There is good evidence that many of these are alcohol related”.

We agree this would be enlightening; however we did not record this information during our data collection.

In summary, I feel we have addressed the valid concerns raised by the reviewer. I would like to emphasise that our study concerns a very topical area of both public and academic interest and suggests interesting shifts in the timing of alcohol related attendances since the Licensing Act.

Yours sincerely,

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