Author’s response to reviews

Title: Cross Sectional Analysis of Respiratory Symptoms in an Injection Drug User Cohort: The Impact of Obstructive Lung Disease and HIV

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Dear Respiratory Research Editor in Chief,

Enclosed in this submission is an original research publication titled “Cross Sectional Analysis of Respiratory Symptoms in an Injection Drug User Cohort: The Impact of Obstructive Lung Disease and HIV” by M. Bradley Drummond, Gregory D. Kirk, Erin P. Ricketts, Meredith C. McCormack, J. Christian Hague, John F. McDyer, Shruti H. Mehta, Eric A. Engels, Robert A. Wise and Christian A. Merlo. This publication was initially submitted to Respiratory Research, but at the recommendations of the editorial board, it is not being submitted to BMC Pulmonary Medicine.

This analysis utilizes data from a large cohort of inner city individuals at risk for obstructive lung disease (OLD) and human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) infection. In this study we characterize the independent and joint effects of HIV and OLD on respiratory symptoms. We found that HIV significantly worsens dyspnea, but not respiratory symptoms in individuals of similar OLD status. As well, OLD and HIV have an additive detrimental effect on dyspnea. We feel these findings are of particular relevance to individual practitioners as well as health care groups caring for patients at risk for these combined comorbidities. Additionally, our analysis represents the largest cohort of individuals at risk for HIV and OLD characterized by formal spirometric criteria. Thank you for taking the time to review what we feel is an exciting manuscript. Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions.

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