Author's response to reviews

Title: Determinants of Arterial Stiffness in COPD

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Author's response to reviews: see over
To,

The Editor,

BMC Pulmonary Medicine

Dear Dr. Cornacchia,

We thank the Editors and Reviewers for their suggestions and helpful comments. We have modified the manuscript to address the points raised as outlined below and hope you will find it suitable for publication.

Reviewer's report 1
The points raised have been addressed or a response made. The manuscript has improved from the original version. There remain some minor comments:

Minor essential revisions

1. In the results of the abstract, the authors describe that “aPWV was also strongly associated with CVD but this did not reach statistical significance”. This information is contradictory and should be omitted or adapted and differentiated between univariate and multivariate analysis. Please do the same in the last paragraph of the results section of the manuscript.

We agree with the Reviewer and have deleted the sentence from the abstract and modified the last sentence of the results to indicate that the association between aPWV and CVD was non-significant on multivariate testing.

2. In the introduction the paragraph describing arterial stiffness as a target of pharmacological and exercise interventions has not been adapted although the authors claim ‘to have modified the reference to reflect this correction’. The revised version of the paragraph is unchanged and still misleading.

We have clarified that the benefits appear limited to those patients with more significant elevations in arterial stiffness with pharmacologic intervention.

3. Omit reference 14 from the results section.
We thank the Reviewer for pointing this out, and have made the change.

4. Omit “There was a trend toward a significant association between aPWV and CVD (p=0.06) (Table 2).” from the results section.
We have deleted this line.

5. In the third paragraph of the results section table 2 and 3 are mixed up.

We thank the Reviewer for highlighting this error. We have corrected this in the Revised Manuscript.
5. In the discussion the authors describe that they have shown previously that inhaled corticosteroid/long acting beta agonist likely reduces arterial stiffness. For the reader it is unclear why these inhaled combinations were not considered in the analysis.

Determinants of arterial stiffness were measured at a baseline visit while patients were not taking their maintenance COPD treatments and before study drug was administered, and so inhaled corticosteroid/long acting beta agonist was not factored into the analysis.

6. In Table 2, FEV1 was listed in definition of abbreviations although it was not included in the analysis.
We thank the Reviewer for pointing out this error. We have now included expansion for abbreviations TAC and CAC in place of FEV1.

7. Last part of conclusions: Please omit “that adds to traditional risk stratification”
We have made this change.

8. The quality of the figure is low and a figure legend is missing (or I haven’t found it).
We have now provided a higher resolution Figure, and included a Figure Legend.

Reviewer's report 2
The authors have addressed all my comments

Thank you again for the favorable reviews of our Manuscript and we hope you will find it suitable for publication.

Sincerely,

Surya P. Bhatt, MD
Mark T. Dransfield, MD for all authors