Author's response to reviews

Title: Is nebulized saline a placebo in COPD?

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To BioMed Central 1 September 2004

Dear Sirs

Thank you for your e-mail and Dr Black's very positive referee report.

I note that there are no major essential revisions.

I am pleased to respond to the minor essential revisions as follows:

1. I have modified the first paragraph on page 10 as suggested. (and made similar changes in the conclusions section of the abstract).

2. I have deleted the line in paragraph 2. page 11 as suggested.

3. (a) I am happy for the editors to delete the mean values in Table 2 and show only the median values if they think that this will make the table clearer. Many readers might wish to see the mean and 95% CI also but this is essentially an editorial decision.
   (b) I have changed "Subjective score" to "Breathlessness Score" in table 2. I agree that this makes the table easier to understand.
   (c) As with 3 (a), I would be happy for the editors to decide if the last two items in table 2 (Symptom Relief Score) should be moved to form a third table. If so, the text reference to table 2 should say "tables 2 and 3" and the title of table 2 would change to read "Table 2; Results of FEV1 and Breathlessness scores" The title of the new table 3 would be "Table 3; Results of Symptom Relief Scores following nebulized treatment" The message about Median in top line of table header would be the same as in table 2.

4. I have amended the references as requested. The Author "Sutherland ER" gave his name as "E Rand Sutherland" in the published paper and I thought this was a complex surname!

5. The brackets for reference 12 on page 5 have been inserted (apologies for omission).

6. Again apologies for mixture of "nebulizer" and "nebuliser". This resulted from a partially successful "Find and Exchange" command in Microsoft Word! This is now corrected - all versions read nebulizer or nebulized. If the editors prefer nebuliser and nebulised, please feel free to change back. Both versions are widely used!

Finally a note re author names, I am afraid that I am called by my middle initial (Like J Edgar Hoover!). The version to use in the manuscript is given below.

Dr B. Ronan O'Driscoll