Author’s response to reviews

Title: Assessment of nerve involvement in the lumbar spine: association between magnetic resonance imaging, physical examination and pain drawing findings

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Version: 5 Date: 6 July 2010

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Answers to Reviewer’s report

We are sincerely grateful for each comment and have revised the manuscript accordingly:

The words “with long-standing nerve root symptoms” has been inserted in the first sentence of each conclusion, in the aim of the background section and also commented on under patient characteristics in the result section.

The following paragraph has been added to the end of the limitations in the discussion section:
“We acknowledge that normally a diagnosis is made on the basis of a sum of observations with varying reliability and validity. However, in this study we wanted to specifically compare a few of the main diagnostic methods as we consider that these methods – especially the MRI - are more commonly relied upon in the overall diagnostic conclusion.”

The question about the radiologist’s assessment has been clarified with the following text:
“Each radiologist made a first assessment before reading the patient’s history from the referring physician. Each radiologist also made a second assessment after reading the patient’s history from the referring physician.”

P.7 line 8 (now p.8 line 8) has been changed to “Visible nerve involvement resulting from spine processes was assessed subjectively.”

P.11 lines 6 and 17 (now p.12 line 7 and 17) “MRI defined” has been added and the comma moved

P.12 lines 13,15 and 24 (now p.13 lines 13,16 and 24) the word assessed has been replaced by “considered”

P.15 line 19 (now p.16 line 11) the word “caused” has been added

The word prevalence’s has been corrected where needed.

P.15 (now p16) the long sentence at the end of paragraph 2 has not been changed, as we have not found a better way to express the content. The comma has been moved.

The word protrusion has been changed to protrusion and thoracic to thoracic in all tables.

In the radiological checklist (MRI protocol) there are several findings that can be graded 3 – see additional file 1.