Author's response to reviews

Title: Clinical, socio-demographic and radiological predictors of short-term outcome in rotator cuff disease

Authors:

Ole M Ekeberg (o.m.ekeberg@medisin.uio.no)
Erik Bautz-Holter (erik.bautz-holter@medisin.uio.no)
Niels G Juel (NielsGunnar.Juel@ullevaal.no)
kaia B engebretsen (k.b.engebretsen@medisin.uio.no)
synnøve kvalheim (kvsy@ullevaal.no)
Jens I Brox (jens.ivar.brox@oslo-universitetssykehus.no)

Version: 3 Date: 17 July 2010

Author's response to reviews:

BMC musculoskeletal disorders.
Editor

Date: 14.07.10

Submission of revised manuscript.

Enclosed is revised version of the paper. Following is a point-by-point response to the concerns of the reviewers.

Yours sincerely,

Ole M. Ekeberg, MD, Research fellow
Departement of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation
Oslo University Hospital, N-0407 Oslo, Norway.

tel: + 47 23027444
fax: + 47 23027455
e-mail: ole.m.ekeberg@medisin.uio.no
Reviewer I: Johan Hviid Andersen

1) Results of SPADI for each treatment group are reported in the text as suggested. The change in SPADI score is larger than the minimal clinical important difference and should be regarded as a significant drop in score, see page 9.

2) Table 4 is removed from the paper. Results from the logistic regression is briefly reported in the results section and in discussion.

3) We agree that the title of the paper was somewhat imprecise and changed the title as suggested.

Reviewer II: Giuseppe Milano

1) We believe the reviewer has provided an important and critical remark regarding the limitation of the methodology used in the current paper. The concerns of the reviewer are addressed in the discussion section on page 13, including systematic and random bias and shortcomings of the study which may have influenced results. We have also imported some of the background information and references provided by the reviewer.

2) The hypothesis of the study is written more clearly in the background section, see page 4.

3) References on the accuracy of imaging in discriminating pathoanatomy of the rotator cuff is provided on page 4.

4) The primary outcome is the follow up SPADI score at six weeks, this is made clear in text on page 5.

5) This study is a secondary analysis of a randomized study, hence no formal sample size calculation was undertaken before starting the study. There seems to be no straightforward method of estimating sample size in multivariable prognostic research, but as a rule of thumb, it has been argued by statisticians that for each predictor studied, at least 10 outcomes are required (Moons and Altman 2009 BMJ). This is clarified in the methods section.

6) Text in table 1 is corrected.

Editor:

1) The abbreviation HSCL and reasons for cut off point is explained and referenced, on page 5.

2) The questionnaire with anchors used for assessing work related tasks is described more thoroughly on page 6.

3) The wording on line 140 and 179 has been changed as correctly identified by the editor.