Author's response to reviews

Title: Sexual health for women with Rheumatoid Arthritis in relation to physiotherapy - a qualitative study

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Author's response to reviews: see over
Cover letter

Dear Biomed Central Editorial

We thank You for all valuable comments on our manuscript and all suggestions for improvements. We have now improved the manuscript according to Your suggestions and hope that it now can be published.

The following improvements have been performed:

Reviewer 1: Willy van Berlo

Reviewer's report:

The suggested change in the abstract section has been done and the sentence is rewritten. This is also rewritten in the results section.

Results: The main theme that emerged in the material was that the body and the total life situation affected sexual health.

The suggested addition has been made in the sentence on p.7

The physical dimension was experienced as touch, caressing, showing love and tenderness as well as sexual intercourse.

The sentence on p.10 concerning relational impacts has been rewritten.

The relational impacts of RA were experienced within the field of sexuality, as for example different sexual needs. Other relational impacts of RA concerned reduced capacity to perform daily activities.

The suggested change in the sentence on p.14 has been done.

Inability to be as physically active as the informants wanted to be was mentioned as a reason for reduced sexual health.

The sentence on p.15 has been rewritten to clarify the authors opinions.

Decreased sexual health is common for women with RA, and their sexual health problems remain after two years of RA, despite medication [42]. This shows the importance of finding ways to improve sexual health for women with RA.

In the conclusion, the second conclusion has been removed from the section.

- Sexual health was affected by RA in different ways for the informants.
• Possibilities to improve sexual health were improved partner communication and physiotherapy.

• Physiotherapy can play an active role in improving sexual health for patients with RA.

Reviewer 2: Talli Rosenbaum –

Reviewer’s report: No recommended changes.

Reviewer 3: Mari Bjorkman

Reviewer’s report:

The recommended change in the abstract has been done.

The ICF core sets for patients with Rheumatoid Arthritis (RA) acknowledge sexual function and intimate relationships as important since the patients’ sexual health can be affected by the disease.

The suggested addition to the methods section has been done.

The informants were informed of the study by leaflets and by their local physiotherapist at the hospitals.

The range of the HAQ has been included in the informants section.

The HAQ-levels of the informants varied between 0-2.13 (0 is the minimum and 3 is the maximum score possible), which indicates a great variety in daily functional ability.

The results section has been shortened and the reviewer’s suggestion has been followed, see page 12.

The manuscript has been language checked again.