Author's response to reviews

Title: Claim-based recurrent low back pain; a 8-year decrease in prevalence in adults under 65 years of age.

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Author's response to reviews: see over
Dr Yves Henrotin  
**Section Editor**  
*BMC Musculoskeletal Disorders*

Dear Dr Henrotin,

We would be pleased if you considered the enclosed manuscript entitled: “**Claim-based recurrent low back pain; a 8-year decrease in prevalence in adults under 65 years of age**” by Nicolas Beaudet, Josiane Courteau, Philippe Sarret and Alain Vanasse, for publication in *BMC Musculoskeletal Disorders*.

The study explores administrative data on low back pain (LBP) obtained from the administrative database of our universal health insurance plan covering the medical services of the inhabitants of the Canadian province of Quebec. This registry allows for secondary analyses on extensive samples.

Although a large body of literature has been published on LBP, this common musculoskeletal disorder remains a burden for patients and the healthcare system. Chronic and recurrent low back pain are conditions being more discussed lately in part because of their increasing impact on health budgets. There are many relevant descriptive reports on the LBP prevalence, but the literature is less abundant in regards to the annual prevalence for recurrent low back pain on large populations in age and sex specific categories over time.

Indeed, the universal healthcare system of this Canadian province allows the retrieval of all the consultations pertaining to low back pain over time. To gain in specificity regarding the recurrence, patients were selected during an 8-year period (2000 to 2007) if they consulted a physician at least three times for a low back pain condition within 365 days. The selection of 401 264 patients was based on ICD-9 codes extracted in the physician’s claims database.

Tables of annual prevalence, trends and relative risks for both genders and age categories from 18 to 90+ years of age are described in this manuscript to give an overview of the progression of this musculoskeletal disorder. Interestingly, the annual prevalence decreases in young adults (<65y) but increases in elders (>65y). We believe that BMC Musculoskeletal Disorders would reach the appropriate readership to expose our results.
The contents of the manuscript are original and the results have not been published or accepted for publication, either in whole or in part in another journal. No part of the manuscript is under consideration for publication elsewhere, and it will not be submitted elsewhere prior to hearing the decision of the Editorial Board, or at any time if accepted by *BMC Musculoskeletal disorders*.

All authors have read and agreed to the contents of the manuscript and have no competing interests.

Sincerely,

Alain Vanasse, MD, PhD, FCMF
Professor