Author’s response to reviews

Title: Prostate specific antigen for prostate cancer in a European population: a systematic review

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Author’s response to reviews: see over
Dear Editor,

Thank you for taking the time to consider this study for publication. We are grateful for the input of the two reviewers and have revised the report in response to their points of concern.

In response to the 1st review:

The study reviews the use of total prostate specific antigen (tPSA) alone as a diagnostic test rather than prostate specific antigen (PSA) as a whole and the various different measurements related to it. We have altered the text to ensure this is clear and that the phrase “total prostate specific antigen” or the abbreviation “tPSA” are used throughout. We believe this review does stand as a valuable and clinically relevant study. The Conclusions section includes the comment that other tests involving PSA may give a higher diagnostic accuracy.

In response to the 2nd review:

1. The suggested title alteration has been accepted.
2. The Background section has been revised and references have been included which focus on Europe rather than the UK.
3. Explanations of epidemiological concepts which the reader can reasonably be expected to understand have been removed from the Background section. Alterations have been made throughout to make the manuscript more succinct.
4. The Methods section has been shortened with inappropriate comments moved to more fitting sections. The style has been changed to be less narrative.
5. The Results section has been rearranged to provide a more logical and cohesive presentation of the findings of the study. Aspects inappropriate to this section have been moved to the Discussion section or removed entirely.
6. Methodological references have been included in the discussion of the significance of publication bias.
7. The discussion of the relevance of this study to a clinical setting has been revised and the point is made that the results can be applied to symptomatic European men in the primary and secondary healthcare setting.
8. Comments about the methodological quality of specific studies have now been included and reflected on in the Discussion section.

We include the revised study for submission. Thank you again for your consideration.

Yours faithfully