Author's response to reviews

Title: Comparison of the benefits of cochlear implantation versus contra-lateral routing of signal hearing aids in adult patients with single-sided deafness: study protocol for a prospective within-subject longitudinal trial

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Author's response to reviews: see over
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To the editor,

Please find enclosed a revised manuscript reporting the protocol for our clinical trial entitled “Comparison of the benefits of cochlear implantation versus contra-lateral routing of signal hearing aids in adult patients with single-sided deafness: study protocol for a prospective within-subject longitudinal trial”. We have revised the manuscript to address the additional editorial requests. Each request is listed below with our response in italic font.

**Editorial requests**

1. We note that your research is to be carried out at multiple sites. Ethical approval should be obtained at each site. Please include a statement confirming that this will be done in your methods section.

   *Multi-centre studies conducted within the UK National Health Service obtain ethical approval for activities across all study sites from a single ethics committee through the co-ordinated National Research Ethics Service (NRES). Ethical approval is therefore not obtained at each site individually but rather a single ethics committee takes responsibility for the ethical review across all sites. As part of the ethics application for the current study, therefore, details were provided of the study activities and clinical/research personnel at each site for approval by the committee. In this case, the ethics committee happened to be based near one of the study sites in Nottingham, but that does not restrict its approval to study activities at that location.*

   *We acknowledge that this may be a different system from how ethical review is handled in other healthcare systems. We have therefore revised the ‘Methods’ section to clarify that the favourable ethical opinion obtained for the study covered activities at all study sites, as follows:*

   “*The trial protocol and the study activities across the five NHS trusts were given a favourable opinion by the National Research Ethics Committee, East Midlands Nottingham - 2, Nottingham, UK (12/EM/0378).”*

Thank you for considering our manuscript for publication.

Yours sincerely,

On behalf of my fellow authors,

Dr Pádraig Kitterick