Author's response to reviews

Title: Coronary artery bypass grafting and sensorineural hearing loss, a cohort study.

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Sir,

Following changes have been made in the manuscript titled 'Coronary artery bypass grafting and sensorineural hearing loss, a cohort study', in light of reviewer's comments.

Reviewer
Roger Davis
Minor Essential Revisions
An attempt has been made to better justify the sample size calculation in the revised manuscript and also in this cover letter. Two widely varying estimates exist in literature (0.1% and 13.2%). The first estimate is from a retrospective study and the other from a study believed to include overly inclusive criteria. Therefore both these studies had their intrinsic flaws and these results generated are subject to be somewhat flawed. However, taking the estimate that was expected to generate a somewhat manageable sample size (13.2%), the sample size comes out to be 138 (69 each group). However, to further increase the power of the study, the best possible option (that is also manageable) is to take an estimate that is midway between the two values. That is why this value is being adapted. Controls are being taken on the basis of one control per case.

It is indeed reasonable to assume that the hearing loss in a group undergoing head and neck surgery is the same as in general population. There is no report in literature of association of SNHL with any specific non-otologic, non-cardiac surgery, apart from certain neurosurgical procedures involving the brainstem and/or the VII-VIIIth cranial nerve complex. So any surgery apart from the above mentioned, which employs the same type of anaesthesia and is of similar time duration (the two pertinent factors) can be taken as control to generate the sample. We have decided to use the patients undergoing surgeries for head and neck tumors, not having any otologic, brain stem or the VII-VIIIth cranial nerve complex involvement, as members of the unexposed group. This is mentioned in the manuscript.

The typographical errors have been corrected.
1. 'Fischer exact test' has been replaced with 'Fisher exact test' on page 3 and 10.
2. 'date interpretation' has been replaced with 'data interpretation' on page 3.
3. 'morbid' has been replaced with 'morbidity' on page 4.

Regards.