Author's response to reviews

Title: Impact of chronic sputum on quality of life in women with COPD: an observational study

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Author's response to reviews: see over
Bordeaux, the 28th September 2013

Dear Editor,

Thanks very much regarding your editorial work. We found the remarks of the reviewers very helpful.

You’ll find enclosed a point-by-point response and a new version of the manuscript revised.

We hope that this version of the manuscript is now suitable for publication in the BMC Women Health Journal.

Best regards

Chantal Raherison, MD, PhD
Reviewer: Hideaki Senjyu

Major comments:

Inclusion criteria were: Inclusion criteria were outpatients more than 40 years old, with a spirometric diagnosis of COPD according to GOLD guidelines with post-bronchodilator FEV1/FVC under 0.70 and FEV1 under 80% predicted. Patients might have been followed for COPD for at least three months. The first patient included had to be a woman. (Page 5, Para 1, line 6). Each pulmonologist recruited three consecutive patients once the first woman was included. (Page 5, line 14)

Tables 1 and 2 describes all the population with n=183 men and n=247 women, all population n=430. This is mentioned in both tables 1 and 2 pages 13 and 14, at the top of both tables.

Minor comments:

1. Mean age of Table 1 is changing from Women to the upper part of the table. Correction has been made in table 1 page 13.

2. The reason for having set the cutoff point of BMI to 21, was to be in agreement with the BODE index. In BODE index, BMI lower than 21 kg/m2 was a predictive factor of mortality in COPD (Celli, NEJM, 2004). This point has been added in the methods section (page 5 line 17)

3. The manuscript has been reviewed by a native English speaker (Ray Cooke).
Reviewer: Takashi Hajiro

Major compulsory revisions:

1. The manuscript has been reviewed by a native English speaker (Ray Cooke).

2. We agreed with the reviewer regarding the number of subjects included in the multivariate analysis. For statistical reason, we only included variables with less than 25% of data lacking in final model to determine factors associated with quality of life, which decreased the size of the sample. However, we didn’t find any significant difference between subjects included and subjects excluded regarding demographic characteristics and clinical aspects. This point has been added page 7 lines 23.

Minor essential revisions:

1. Title has changed: Clinical characteristics and quality of life in women with COPD: an observational study, page 1 line 1

2. Abstract: SGRQ has been spelled out, line 9 page 2

3. Background: The First and second paragraph are only focused on what it knows nowadays regarding COPD in women. However, we have shortened the paragraphs (157 words instead of 174 words)

4. Methods section has been revised. Inclusion criteria are now described page 5 lines 4 to line 10.

5. SGRQ has been written in full spell. Page 5 line 10.

6. Page 6 line 18. Yes, patients gave written consent; this is mentioned in the methods section page 5 line 9.

7. Page 7 line 12: As mentioned in the methods section, severity of dyspnea is more defined page 5, line 17, according to MRC scale. Chronic cough
was defined as cough during 3 months and during two consecutive years, which the admitted definition of chronic bronchitis, the same definition was made for chronic sputum. This point has been added in the methods section page 5 lines 13.

8. Discussion: The first paragraph was assessed in order to synthetize the mains results of the study, and then compared them to the literature. The discussion has been corrected. Page 9 line 8. The titled have changed, as requested by the reviewer. (Modification 1).

9. Page 10 lines 21-22: modified comment regarding sputum in women, had been added.

10. References have been corrected.

11. Page 13, table 1, Numbers in women column have been aligned.

12. The manuscript has been reviewed by a native English speaker (Ray Cooke)