Author's response to reviews

Title: Informed Consent Practices for Surgical Care at University Teaching Hospitals; a case in a low resource setting

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Author's response to reviews:

Response to reviewers' comments

Title: Informed Consent Practices for Surgical Care at University Teaching Hospitals; a case in a low resource setting

Version: 1 Date: 25 November 2013

Reviewer 1: Marko Jukic

Reviewer's report:

Minor Essential Revisions

Response: Corrections have been made.

Version: 1 Date: 6 December 2013

Reviewer 2: Adewale Adisa

Reviewer's comment:

A major factor that will affect the outlook of this study and the implication of its result is the population studied. The authors included many junior doctors among who are interns. It is difficult to justify this seeing that they set out to evaluate "surgeons" They also defined surgeons as any doctor who routinely perform surgical procedures. It is doubtful if interns fulfill this criteria.
I am not sure of their result will be significantly altered if these interns are excluded. Their responses can be analysed and presented separately. It would actually be more robust to cross tabulate the responses with the cadre of doctors interviewed to see how much influence their experience had on the practice.

Response:
The study covered all doctors that perform surgery at the different surgical units across the disciplines. Table 1 has been added. This has been added to the results section of the main manuscript as well.

There were no significant differences concerning obtaining informed consent among doctors in the different specialties, level of education or experience as shown in the table 1 after cross tabulation. The percentages of doctors obtaining informed consent was similar across the different disciplines and level of experience.

Secondly, intern doctors in our setting do a significant amount of surgery after being supervised for some time. They run a lot of the surgery units in up country hospitals, hence their contribution to this study is important.

Table 1: Cross tabulation of obtaining informed consent all the time by specialization

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Specialty</th>
<th>Yes ( % )</th>
<th>No ( % )</th>
<th>Total %</th>
<th>Odds ratio</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intern doctors</td>
<td>28 (50)</td>
<td>18 (50)</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specialists</td>
<td>44.7 (21)</td>
<td>55.3 (26)</td>
<td>47.6</td>
<td>0.81 (0.31 to 2.11)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postgraduates</td>
<td>41.7 (10)</td>
<td>58.3 (14)</td>
<td>19.2</td>
<td>0.71 (0.22 to 0.28)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General practitioners</td>
<td>66.7 (12)</td>
<td>33.3 (6)</td>
<td>14.4</td>
<td>2 (0.54 to 7.92)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>48.8 (61)</td>
<td>51.2 (64)</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The general practitioners include both medical officers and dental surgeons with a bachelors degree and completed internship.