Author's response to reviews

Title: Impact of symptoms on quality of life before and after diagnosis of coeliac disease: results from a UK population survey

Authors:

   Alastair M Gray (alastair.gray@dphpc.ox.ac.uk)
   Irine N Papanicolas (I.N.Papanicolas@lse.ac.uk)

Version: 2 Date: 22 March 2010

Author's response to reviews: see over
Hannah Clark
Biomed Central

Dear Hannah

MS 8296398134300324: Impact of symptoms on quality of life before and after diagnosis of celiac disease: results from a UK population survey

Thank you for your email with attached comments from referees on the above manuscript. We have now had a chance to review and revise the paper and are now submitting a revised version.

We are grateful to the two referees for their comments, and have responded as follows:

Reviewer P Green: Did not request changes.
Reviewer R Anderson: requested 4 discretionary revisions, all of which have been addressed:

1) Do the respondents match the Coeliac UK membership?
   We previously noted in the Data section that respondents and non-respondents were similar in age and sex distribution. We have now clarified in the Methods section that the sample was stratified, in the Data section that respondents were not statistically significant from the total membership in age distribution or sex, and mentioned again in the Discussion section that the sample was stratified.

2) Page 6: Is there any information on the effect of retrospectively self-reported EQ-5D?
   In the Discussion section we include reference to 2 studies which use and discuss retrospective measures of quality of life. We have now added that we are not aware of formal comparisons of the effect of this using the EQ-5D.

3) Does EQ-5D decline with age? If it does, should comparison be with age-matched controls at pre-diagnosis age?
   This is an interesting point; EQ-5D does decline in older age groups. We have now modified Table 4 to show the UK norm at age of survey and at age of diagnosis, and mention this in the Results section on page 7.

4) Mention of NICE Guidelines and their QALY estimates.
   We have added a reference to these Guidelines and noted in the Discussion that their literature review they undertook was unable to find any utility estimates in the literature.

We hope that these responses address all other points of concern raised. We look forward to hearing from you in due course.

Yours sincerely

Alastair Gray               Irene Papanicolas