Author’s response to reviews

Title: Factors affecting the hospital stay in psychiatric patients: the role of comorbiditity requiring referral.

Authors:

Athanassios Douzenis (thandouz@med.uoa.gr)
Dionisios Seretis (ds438@bath.ac.uk)
Stella Nika (nika_stella@yahoo.com)
Paraskevi Nikolaidou (nenanikolaid@hotmail.com)
Athanassia Papadopoulou (athanpapad@hotmail.gr)
Emmanouil N Rizos (erizos@med.uoa.gr)
Christos Christodoulou (christo.christodoulou@gmail.com)
Christos Tsopelas (tsopelas@gmail.com)
Dominic Mitchell (dm362@bath.ac.uk)
Lefteris Lykouras (elykoura@med.uoa.gr)

Version: 2 Date: 8 December 2011

Author’s response to reviews:

We provide here in brackets the extract added at the end of the DESIGN section. The manuscript should now read: Ethical approval for this research was granted by the Attikon University General Hospital ethics Committee and consequently by the Attikon General Hospital Scientific Committee.

"Due to the sensitive nature of this study in terms of both the information handled (access to medical notes, data, records) and the apparent severity of the mental health conditions involved the participants were briefed and provided consent both on admission and after discharge. Shortly after admission patients were orally informed of the general aims of the study and were fully informed of their rights i.e. non-participation, withdrawal at any stage without consequences for their health care. In order not to reduce the ability for valid consent a cooling off period of two months after discharge was decided by the researchers before each patient was re-approached to provide full informed oral and written consent. Thus, the sample presented here consists of the patients who freely provided oral and written informed consent, both on admission and after the cooling off period aforementioned."