Author's response to reviews

Title: Process skill rather than motor skill seems to be a predictor of costs for rehabilitation after a stroke in working age; a longitudinal study with a 1 year follow up post discharge.

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Author's response to reviews: see over
REVISION 4
We have to our best knowledge again tried to accommodate the wishes and suggestions and hope it will be satisfying.

1. The figure is added as suggested.

2. From the beginning of the study we have had a statistician involved in the study to calculate power. The same statistician has also been involved as discussion partner during the work as well as support to be able to respond on the suggestions from the reviewers. Therefore, all remarks on statistical questions have been discussed with the statistician and thoroughly considered in order to meet the request from the reviewer. However in some matters we have concluded that we disagree with the suggestions, based on for example knowledge of the population studied, which is the case in point 4 about corrected and uncorrected values of length of stay. We (i.e. authors and statistician) have tried to explain our reasons in order to have a dialogue with the referee. Somehow we have difficulties in communicating our views (as well as understanding the reason for the importance of doing the suggested statistical operations). Some of the suggested manoeuvres we are not (nor our statistician or those working with her) aware of how they should be done. We have the same situation with point 5 concerning overall power. There is a low power in the study which is stated in the paper and what we can understand another power calculation will come to the same conclusion. If it is important for some reason we would appreciate an explanation as well as some suggestions of how this can be done.

3. We apologize for neglecting to make table 1 as suggested. This is now taken care of.

4. In table 2 we have deleted the mean and kept only median and range as suggested. However, we believe that if possible we would like to keep the mean as the reader then gets an idea of the skewness.

5. To our knowledge the intercept usually has no interpretation in the far end, for instance in a regression between weight (y) and height (x), the interpretation of the intercept is the weight of a person with the height 0. The use of the intercept is to show a goodness of the model in the area of interest. Altman writes in his book practical statistics for medical research under intercept, p315 “The intercept is not usually of great interest” and on p 336 about the constant corresponding to the intercept “Like the intercept in linear regression, it (the constant) is not of great interest. If we have misunderstood something important we would be grateful for an explanation in order to be able to add this in the manuscript.