Author's response to reviews

Title: Hypnotic Use in A Population-Based Sample of Over Thirty-Five Thousand Interviewed Canadians

Authors:

Aliya Kassam (aliya.kassam@iop.kcl.ac.uk)
Scott B Patten (patten@ucalgary.ca)

Version: 2 Date: 7 November 2006

Author's response to reviews: see over
1 November 2006

RE: MS 1710699381103331 Hypnotic Use in A Population-Based Sample of Over Thirty-Five Thousand Interviewed Canadians, Aliya Kassam and Scott B Patten

Dear PHM Editorial Team,

Thank you for conditionally accepting our paper, "Hypnotic Use in A Population-Based Sample of Over Thirty-Five Thousand Interviewed Canadians " to Population Health Metrics. My co-author Scott Patten and I have reviewed the manuscript carefully and taken the reviewer’s comments into consideration. The reviewer’s comments were as follows:

1. Authors should rewrite abstract, adding results such as % use, and strength of associations.

2. Authors should emphasize that a.) BZD have been shown possibly useful for the short-term management of non-fatal diseases, whereas they have been associated with a high risk of fatal events (accidents, falls, cognition failure etc.) especially with long-term use in the elderly, which seems to be the predominant pattern of use. b.) Use in patients without obvious indications also indicate extensive misuse.

3. Authors should carefully re-read the paper, as there are a few typos and omissions.

We have addressed the above comments by the following:

Comment 1: The abstract has been re-written to include key results including their 95% confidence intervals.

Comment 2a: In the first paragraph of introduction section of the paper, the second and third sentences have been reworded to emphasize what the reviewer has suggested:

These medications can be beneficial in the short-term management of diverse symptoms, most notably anxiety, insomnia and agitation. However, they also have adverse effects which can be fatal, particularly with long-term use and use in the elderly, where epidemiological studies have linked benzodiazepine exposure to motor vehicle accidents [1], hip fractures [2,3] cognitive problems and self-care limitations [4].
Comment 2b: The last paragraph of the conclusion section of the paper, has been reworded to emphasize what the reviewer suggested:

**Certain demographic variables are associated with the use of BDZ/SSH medications, yet this does not appear to be easily accounted for by major categories of mental disorder. Therefore, focused clinical studies should be conducted in order to identify the causes of these differences, and to clarify their clinical significance since BDZ/SSH use in those without obvious indications may also point to extensive misuse.**

We feel this is sufficient in addressing the reviewer’s comments as these revisions were made in two major sections of the paper, namely the introduction (comment 2a) and conclusion (comment 2b). As a result, this makes readers aware of both the benefits and dangers of BDZ use and the implications of major categories of mental disorder not accounting for the use of BDZ/SSH, which could indicate misuse.

**Comment 3:** Both authors carefully re-read the paper, and corrected typing errors and omissions.

If you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,

Aliya Kassam BSc (Hons), MSc
Institute of Psychiatry, King's College London
Health Services Research Department
Box PO29
De Crespigny Park
London SE5 8AF

Tel: +44 (0)20 7848 0457
Fax: +44 (0)20 7277 1462
Email: aliya.kassam@iop.kcl.ac.uk