Author's response to reviews

Title: Who is the research subject in cluster randomized trials in health research?

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Version: 4 Date: 18 July 2011

Author's response to reviews: see over
Dear Dr. Goldsmith,

Thank you very much for sending us further suggestions to improve our manuscript. We describe the changes made to the specific suggestions below.

In addition to the suggested changes, we have taken this opportunity to revise the description of the examples at the beginning of the paper to ensure that the level of detail presented is consistent with examples in other papers in the series. We corrected an error in the discussion of example 4 and now make clear that the surgeons in the study are not research subjects (they merely delivered the study interventions to the patients and were not themselves targeted by the interventions). We have also edited the article once again, making some minor changes throughout.

We hope you find the changes made satisfactory.

Yours sincerely,

Charles Weijer.

**Reviewer's report #1**
**Title:** Who is the research subject in cluster randomized trials in health research?
**Version:** 2 Date: 23 April 2011
**Reviewer:** Charlie Goldsmith

**Reviewer's report:**
**Title:** Who is the research subject in cluster randomized trials in health research?
**Version:** 3 Date: 30 June 2011
**Reviewer:** Charlie Goldsmith

**Reviewer's report:**
1. P(age) 6, p(aragraph) 2, l(ine) 3. Replace [significant] by [important]. Also P 15, p 3, l 4. These are both in language added in this most recent draft.
   - Done.

2. P 37, p 2, l 4. Since [novel] is deleted from the text, it should also be deleted form the Box title on P 46, l 1.
   - Done.