Author's response to reviews

Title: The use of LiDCO based fluid management in patients undergoing hip fracture surgery under spinal anaesthesia: Neck of femur optimisation therapy - targeted stroke volume (NOTTS)

Authors:

Matthew D Wiles (mattwiles@doctors.org.uk)
William JD Whiteley (w.whiteley@nemsa.net)
Chris G Moran (chris.moran@nuh.nhs.uk)
Iain K Moppett (iain.moppett@nottingham.ac.uk)

Version: 3 Date: 6 September 2011

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

6th September August 2011

Re: MS: 1012666617527515

The use of LiDCO based fluid management in patients undergoing hip fracture surgery under spinal anaesthesia: Neck of femur optimisation therapy - targeted stroke volume (NOTTS)

Thank you for the opportunity to revise our manuscript. I have detailed each response below. I have ‘tracked changes’ for all textual changes as requested, though I have taken the liberty of accepting all the minor formatting changes to make it easier to read. I can confirm that all of the authors have approved the changes made to the manuscript.

1. Page 2, paragraph 1, line 3. The figure [23.5] does not correspond to the [26] listed on page 3, paragraph 1, line 4. Should these not be the same?
   Changed as requested.

2. Page 5, paragraph 3, line 3 to 5. The new text should be changed to what is intended and the order of the process. Here is a suggested rewording: [To achieve similar numbers and balance on risk, patients will be stratified according to predicted 30-day mortality (2 levels).]. Stratification on one factor does not guarantee equal numbers unless blocking is employed and this happens for the risk score and not necessarily other covariates. If approximate balance is needed on the other covariates they need to be stratified as well.
   Changed as requested.

   Changed as requested.

4. Page 9, paragraph 6, line 4. Suggest inserting [using the stratification risk categories] after [ANOVA]. Thus ANOVA will for the adjustment of the stratification factor, that is necessary since it is a constraint on the randomization. If the stratification does not change the results of the study conclusions, then it may also be reported as such as well as the simpler analysis.
   Changed as requested.
5. P 9, p 6, l 5 to 8. Consider deleting the sentence: [This is ... ANOVA.] since it duplicates much of what is said in previous lines.  
   Changed as requested.

6. P 10, p 2. Again, the stratification should be used in the analyzes reported here and will involve more than an elementary use of Fisher's exact test and Chi-square and the Cox model. Software such as StatXact or LogXact may be needed instead of SPSS.

7. P 10, p 2, l 5. Suggest including [time dependent] between [for] and [covariates].  
   Changed as requested.

8. P 10, p 3, l 1. Delete [appropriate] since you have not stated which you will use and there is no guarantee what you use will be appropriate. This will depend on the data and their properties that may not be known until the analyzes are completed.  
   Changed as requested.

9. P 10, p 4, l 2 and 3. Suggest replacing [trends towards] by [approaches] since a trend is a straight line function in time, and you do need to have it to be that.  
   Changed as requested.

10. P 10, p 5, l 3. Replace \([p = 0.05]\) by \([\alpha = 0.05]\). Since \(p\) depends on your data, it is still not known. You may be able to use a Greek symbol for \(\alpha\); however, various versions of word processing software sometimes change this to an octothorpe, or sharp sign during conversion.  
    Changed as requested.

11. P 10, last heading. Suggest changing [populations] to [data sets]. You will not have any populations here; at best they are samples.  
    Changed as requested.

12. P 11, p 1, l 5. Since you have not defined the Intention-To-Treat data set, suggest adding at the end of the line: \([; not the Intention-To-Treat set.]\). Neither of the full analysis nor the per protocol set will necessarily be statistically valid for efficacy as they may not contain all the patients randomized.  
    Changed as requested.

13. P 13, 14 and 16. The Reference 4, 38 and 39 use a different date notation than you introduced on P 11, p 5. To rectify this why not change [08] to [Aug] in each case.  
    Changed as requested. All dates now have the format 1 Jan 2011.

14. P 14, R 5. Suggest including the last access date here as well. Also P 16, R 41.  
    Changed as requested.

15. P 16, R 37, l 1. Is [Payment by Results] listed twice in the title? 
    I have checked this with the source document. The authors are the Payment by Results Team. The punctuation has been corrected to make this clearer. The citation of reports is now consistent throughout the references.
16. P 17, right hand box, l 1. Suggest rewriting as [< 10], ie, adding a space.

Changed as requested.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

Iain Moppett (on behalf of the authors).