Author's response to reviews

Title: Should we reconsider the routine use of placebo controls in clinical research?

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Author's response to reviews:

Thank you again for forwarding the comments of the Associate Editor and for the opportunity to respond to them once more.

In response to the Associate Editor's last comments, we have added the following paragraph to the manuscript:

"It should be noted that there are many types of trials for which it is not reasonable or even possible to use placebo controls. Examples of these include surgical interventions, behavioral interventions, and conditions for which there is a standard of care or an effective active drug. While placebo, or sham, controls are theoretically possible for many of these trials, ethical or practical considerations limit the feasibility of conducting such trials. For example, alternative approaches to case management in mental health care cannot employ placebo controls. For the purposes of this discussion, we consider trials for which it is both ethical and feasible to control with placebo."

In addition, we had previously added the following sentence:

"Our discussion here refers exclusively to those conditions for which credible placebos exist and are commonly employed in clinical trials."

We hope that these changes adequately address the concerns.

We appreciate your continued attention to this manuscript.