Author's response to reviews

**Title:** Surgical trials and trial registers: A cross-sectional study of randomized controlled trials published in journals requiring trial registration in their author instructions

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**Author's response to reviews:** see over
Revised manuscript (second revision) - Surgical trials and trial registers: A cross-sectional study of randomized controlled trials published in journals requiring trial registration in their author instructions

Dear Madam, dear Sir,

Please find attached the second revision of our manuscript entitled “Surgical trials and trial registers: A cross-sectional study of randomized controlled trials published in journals requiring trial registration in their author instructions”.

Again, we would like to thank you and the reviewers for the valuable and helpful comments and suggestions, which helped us very much to improve our manuscript again. Please find below a point-to-point response. The new content changes as well as the copy-editing changes are identified by track changes. We would be delighted if it could be now considered for publication in Trials.

I hereby confirm on behalf of all named authors that:

(i) All named authors agree to the submission of the revised manuscript to TRIALS;

(ii) All authors who contributed to the design and writing of the study have been named on the article:
(iii) The work in the article is original;
(iv) The article has not been previously published.

Joerg J. Meerpohl, M.D.
Corresponding author

Yours sincerely (on behalf of the co-authors),

Joerg Meerpohl
Reviewer #1 (Ludovic Reveiz):

Minor Revisions
1. Background Paragraph 3: "Not even one year after publication of the ICMJE statement, the World Health Organization (WHO) established its International Clinical Trials Register Platform (ICTRP)" ...

This is not correct. WHO established standards in 2006 but the ICTRP was launch later (2008?). Thank you for your helpful comment. You are absolutely right: the WHO launched the ICTRP in May 2007, not in 2006 as claimed in our manuscript. Of course, we corrected this in the new version of the manuscript.

2. Emphasize differences between prospectively and retrospectively registered trials. 53% of trials were retrospectively registered in their sample. What are the implications?

Thank you for your valuable suggestion. We now discuss the implications in paragraph 1 of the discussion section.

3. While the authors seem optimistic with their findings (first paragraph of the discussion section) only 1/5 trials are complying with prospective trial registration.

Please see above. We now discuss this issue less optimistic in paragraph 1 of the discussion section.

Reviewer #2 (Andrew Prayle):

The authors have addressed all of my major issues with the manuscript. They have also addressed my minor revisions. Again, many thanks for your helpful support, which had a major and very positive impact on our manuscript.

Reviewer #3 (Richard McGee):

The authors have significantly improved the article since the previous submission. The authors are now quite transparent about what they did and found. I don't have further queries about the study methodology- the methods used seeming reasonable. My only ongoing concerns relate to grammatical and formatting issues - I would suggest the article would benefit from professional editing.

The article is of reasonable relevance but probably only to those working in the field. Thank you again for your valuable comments. We regret that there were grammatical and formatting issues. Therefore, we asked M. Sc. Caroline Mavergames, Web Content and Systems Editor of the International Web Team of the Cochrane Collaboration, to edit language and formatting for this version (http://portal.uni-freiburg.de/imbi/employees?showEmployee=cmamavergames).

Editorial requests:

1) We recommend that you ask a native English speaking colleague to help you copyedit the paper. If this is not possible, you may need to use a professional language editing service. For authors who wish to have the language in their manuscript edited by a native-English speaker with scientific expertise, BioMed Central recommends Edanz (www.edanzediting.com/bmc1). BioMed Central has negotiated a 10% discount to the fee charged to BioMed Central authors by Edanz. Use of an editing service is neither a requirement nor a guarantee of acceptance for publication. For more information, see our FAQ on language editing services at http://www.biomedcentral.com/authors/authorfaq/editing. Please see above. Language and formatting were revised and edited by M. Sc. Caroline Mavergames.

2) Please state clearly whether or not you have funding in the acknowledgement section. If there is no funding, please state this.

There was no funding. This is now clearly stated in the Acknowledgements Section.

Furthermore, we added reference 13 in the discussion section.