Author's response to reviews

Title: A longitudinal study of gene expression in healthy individuals

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

I am writing you regarding our manuscript entitled “A longitudinal study of gene expression in healthy individuals” (manuscript #1240624807190224). The manuscript was recently sent out for a second round of reviews. We are now submitting a revised version that we feel addresses the remaining concerns of the reviewers. A point-by-point description of the changes we have made follows:

(1) Reviewer 2 wrote “Based on several reports and own our experience, that smoking status may change gene expression profiles, I would recommend adding missing information about the former smoking status to the limitations of the study or clarify this in the patient description.”

We did not capture information about the former smoking status of patients at recruitment. Therefore, we have added the sentence “ Former smoking status was not captured” to the “Subjects” section within Methods.

(2) Reviewer 2 wrote “I still do not agree with opinion of the authors, that results may be based on data obtained in a single patient with cancer and one with anemia, although they agree with other reports. I would expect them at least to mention this in limitations of this study.

We agree with Reviewer 2 and have added the sentence “However, for both these cases data is required in larger numbers of patients to draw firm conclusions” to the section “Effect of two severe adverse events on gene expression” within Results and Discussion.

We have now deposited our microarray data into the NCBI's Gene Expression Omnibus database. The data are accessible through the GEO Series accession number GSE16028 (http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/geo/query/acc.cgi?acc=GSE16028). This information has been added to the “Microarray procedures” section within Methods in the new version of the manuscript.

We visited your website again for information about formatting articles for BMC Medical Genomics. As a result, some minor edits were made to the title page. To the best of our knowledge, the manuscript does indeed conform to the journal style.
A new version of our manuscript with the revisions described above has been uploaded to your website. We look forward to hearing from you soon regarding a final decision about publication. Please let me know if you have any further concerns or questions.

Sincerely,

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