Author's response to reviews

Title: Dermoscopy a technique for the early identification of foot melanoma

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Version: 2 Date: 8 March 2009

Author's response to reviews: see over
Dear Editors

Please find the amended version of the paper now uploaded to the JFAR server. We thank the reviewers for their comments and list our responses to the queries below:

1. Please change title to Dermoscopy: a technique for the early identification of foot melanoma. The paper will be flagged as a review so there's no need to add "a review" to the title.

   Amended.

2. Spaces should be inserted before the first bracket, and punctuation marks (commas and full stops) must be placed after the second bracket.

   Amended.

3. Use of capitals in title and subheadings: JFAR uses standard English rather than American English, so capitalisation of proper nouns is not required

   Amended.

4. Lists should use the (i), (ii), (iii) format, rather than 1, 2, 3.

   Amended.

5. Journal titles should be abbreviated using the PubMed journal abbreviations list.

   References amended.

6. Table 1: remove all vertical lines

   Vertical lines removed.

7. Table 2: remove superscripting from Miyazaki et al, remove unnecessary capitals, and justify text to the left. Table 2 should also be converted into a Figure, as it contains illustrative material.

   Amended.

8. Table 3: convert to a figure. Remove capital from "melanoma".

   Amended.
Responses to referees comments:

Reviewer 1

On page 2, under the title of melanoma of the foot, it states that controlling for other variables, their results confirmed that primary melanoma on the foot had a 5 year survival rate of 77% compared with 94% and 95% for lesions on the calf and thigh respectively. The main prognostic variable is Breslow thickness and the reader would want to know whether this was also matched between the 2 groups. This is alluded to in the subsequent paragraph, but it is an area of vagueness in the statement given that other variables are said to be controlled.

This statement has been amended to make this clearer for the reader.

An acronym is a set of initials that can be pronounced as a word. As such ABCD does not constitute an acronym, which is how it was described.

This word has been removed and replaced with the word mnemonic.

Reviewer 2

This manuscript has been prepared to a high standard and I was hard-pressed to even find a typo - second paragraph 'Dermoscopy', '..decision making in when...' no need for 'in'.

Amended.

Given the focus of the review is the value of dermoscopy in recognition of melanomas of the foot, I was surprised at the omission of a few illustrations of acral melanomas - clinical and dermoscopic features - given that the authors have included excellent pics of features from benign plantar naevi.

Two figures have been added (superficial spreading and an acral lentiginous melanoma).

I also question the value of Figure 1 - with all the images of dermatoscopes - perhaps an example of a practitioner using a dermatoscope and some comment regarding the preference, if any, between types of dermatoscope for use on pigmented lesions on the feet?

We thank the reviewer for the comment but would say that the paper aims to present current evidence on the technique, but we are not aware of any published literature which tests the superiority of one brand of dermatoscope over another, therefore as it is
often a matter of personal choice we didn’t feel it appropriate to include more detail on this.

Ivan Bristow