Author's response to reviews

Title: Development of a practical guide for the early recognition for malignant melanoma of the foot and nail unit

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Author's response to reviews:

Dear Editorial Team

The authors wish to thank the reviewers for their comments and suggestions. We wish to respond to the points made:

1. Is mention of amelanocytic melanoma appropriate?

In this particular paper no mention is made of any sub-type of melanoma as the scope of the work is describing the development of guidelines in general. In the subsequent paper (the guidelines themselves) mention is made and amelanotic melanoma and is discussed, along with other sub-types of the disease.

2. As this is an international journal, would mention of some other Govts’ and countries’ policies be appropriate to include?

Reference to the Australasian Melanoma Guidelines have now been added.

3. Some clarification of the oncology input mentioned would be useful. This is mentioned in the abstract but not particularly obvious within the paper.

The reference to skin oncology is only to demonstrate that the dermatologists involved in this paper have a special interest in this area. Accordingly, we have amended the abstract to clarify this.

4. The information about the consultation noted at the end of the results section could be expanded to explain what was undertaken and why, as well as expanding the outcomes of the consultation perhaps.

Since the paper was first submitted the consultation process has been completed and the text amended accordingly.

5. Further information about the methods used (even though there is reference to the NICE system) would be helpful and useful for readers too lazy to access the web, or perhaps more charitably are distant from internet access when reading the paper.
Minor changes have been made to this section and highlighted

6. It would be useful to know more about the proposed new acronym noted in the results section and more about the existing nail acronym.

The use of the acronyms along with the explanation is made within the subsequent paper discussing the guidelines. The reference to the nail melanoma acronym is listed in the references should readers wish to follow this up.

Editorial Recommended Changes:

EDITORIAL SUGGESTIONS

1. In the online submission system, please change the article type to 'Research' rather than 'Commentary'.

Changed

2. Title - please change title to 'Development of clinical guidelines for the early recognition of malignant melanoma of the foot and nail unit', and make this change to both the manuscript and the on-line submission system. Please sure there is no full stop at the end of the title.

Changed

3. Throughout the manuscript, please delete 'podiatrists' and 'chiropodists/podiatrists' and replace with 'clinicians', as the JFAR readership extends beyond these professions, and the content of the manuscript is applicable to other disciplines.

Changed accordingly

4. Table 1 - delete vertical lines, and change caption to "Search terms".

Amended

5. Table 2 - delete vertical lines, and replace RCT's with RCTs.

Amended

Please also highlight (with 'tracked changes'/coloured/underlines/highlighted text) all changes made when revising the manuscript to make it easier for the Editors to give you a prompt decision on your manuscript.

Changes highlighted in Yellow.

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