**Author’s response to reviews**

**Title:** Association between fluctuations in serum chloride levels and 30-day mortality among critically ill patients: A retrospective analysis

**Authors:**

Hyo Jin Kim (raphella.ane@gmail.com)
tak kyu oh (airohtak@hotmail.com)
In-Ae Song (songoficu@outlook.kr)
Jae Ho Lee (jhlee7@snubh.org)

**Version:** 1 **Date:** 29 Apr 2019

**Author’s response to reviews:**

Technical Comments:

1. There currently appear to be two Acknowledgements section: one on page 16 and one on page 19, which contain different statements. Could you please ensure that there is only one Acknowledgements section.

Response: We have deleted the acknowledgement section located on page 16 of the previous submission.

Reviewer reports:

Essam Ezzat Abdel Hakeem, M.D. (Reviewer 1): It is better to write patient Characteristics instead of demographic characteristics

Response: We have changed “demographic characteristics” to “physical characteristics” in the Methods section.

It was better if measurement of chloride in a fixed time from ICU admission

It was better for this study to be a multi-center study

Response: Our study was limited by the fact that the patients’ Cl- levels were not measured at the same time point via the same method. This has been listed as the third limitation of our study. Accordingly, we included “the number of Cl- measurements within 72 h after ICU admission” as
an important covariate in our multivariable model. However, we agree that a future prospective study should be conducted in a multicenter setting, given this limitation. Per your suggestion, we have revised our description of the study limitations for clarity. We believe that our findings provide a good rationale for a future prospective study.

Thank you for your considerate comment.

Mehmet Aksoy (Reviewer 2):

In this retrospective study, authors investigated the associations of fluctuations in serum chloride (Cl-) levels with 30-day mortality after intensive care unit (ICU) admission among critically ill patients. They reported that positive fluctuation in the Cl- levels within the first 72 hours of an ICU stay was associated with increased 30-day mortality among critically ill patients with a severe positive cumulative FB (>10%), normochloremia, or hyperchloremia at the time of ICU admission.

This study is well written. It may be accepted without revision.

Sincerely yours…

Response: Thank you for your kind comments. We believe that our work will provide a good rationale for a future prospective study.