Author’s response to reviews

Title: Left atrial enlargement and clinical considerations in patients with or without a residual interatrial shunt after closure of the left atrial appendage with the WATCHMANTM-Device

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Author’s response to reviews:

Dear Dr. Dickens,

Thank you very much for your Email of November 29th, 2017 and your comments on our submitted manuscript (BCAR-D-17-00553) entitled „Left atrial enlargement and clinical considerations in patients with or without a residual interatrial shunt after closure of the left atrial appendage with the WATCHMANTM-Device”.

We are pleased to read that our previous response and the revised manuscript have adequately addressed the points raised by the reviewers.

We would like to respond to the Editors’ comments as follows:
Point by point response

1. We would also like to ask for you to provide more justification for the contributions of AS, RBD as currently they do not automatically qualify for authorship.

An 'author' is generally considered to be someone who has made substantive intellectual contributions to a published study. According to the ICMJE guidelines, to qualify as an author one should have:

a) made substantial contributions to conception and design, or acquisition of data, or analysis and interpretation of data; AND

b) been involved in drafting the manuscript or revising it critically for important intellectual content; AND

c) given final approval of the version to be published. Each author should have participated sufficiently in the work to take public responsibility for appropriate portions of the content; AND

d) agreed to be accountable for all aspects of the work in ensuring that questions related to the accuracy or integrity of any part of the work are appropriately investigated and resolved.

We would like to add following information to address this comment:

- Prof. Alexander Schmeisser (author AS) is one of the most experienced hemodynamics experts in our working group and has substantially contributed to the conception and design of our study (a). He revised the manuscript critically for important intellectual content including the discussion of important hemodynamic studies (b), gave his final approval of the version to be published (c) and agreed to be accountable for all aspects of the work (d).
• Professor Rüdiger Braun-Dullaeus (author RBD) is the head of our working group and the senior author of this manuscript. He has substantially contributed to nearly all aspects and steps of this study including conception and design (a), drafting and revising the manuscript critically for important intellectual content (b), final approval of the version to be published (c) and agrees to be accountable for all aspects of the work (d).

We modified the “Authors’ contributions” in the “Declarations” section to address the comment above accordingly:

Authors’ contributions:
BL: Concept, data collection, statistics and drafting
TG: 3D-TTE measurements and critical revision
CG: Data collection and drafting
IT: 3D-TTE measurements and drafting
TR: Statistics, art work and drafting
JH: Concept and data collection
SM: Data collection, art work
AS: Conception and design, critical revision, drafting, final approval
RBD: Design, drafting, critical revision and final approval

2. We note that you have included the following statement ‘All patients gave their informed consent’. Please edit this statement in order to confirm whether informed consent was written or verbal and clearly state this in your manuscript. If verbal, please state the reason and whether the ethics committee approved this procedure.

In response to this comment, we modified the 1st sentence in the “Methods” section and the 2nd sentence in the “Ethics approval and consent to participate” subsection accordingly:
Consecutive patients with non-valvular atrial fibrillation, moderate or high thromboembolic risk and contraindication for anticoagulation therapy or high bleeding risk, who were referred to our institution for interventional LAA closure, were enrolled in our study after giving their written informed consent.

…

All patients gave their written informed consent before enrollment in the study.

3. At this stage, please upload your manuscript as a single, final, clean version that does not contain any tracked changes, comments, highlights, strikethroughs or text in different colours. All relevant tables/figures/additional files should also be clean versions. Figures (and additional files) should remain uploaded as separate files.

We uploaded the manuscript (including the tables) and the figures as required.

We would like to thank you very much again and hope to have adequately addressed your comments.

We would be delighted to provide any further information, if necessary.

Sincerely yours,

Blerim Luani