Author’s response to reviews

Title: Comparison of drug-eluting balloon versus drug-eluting stent for treatment of coronary artery disease: A meta-analysis of randomized controlled trials

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Technical Comments:

Editor Comments:

The paper is much improved. I suggest some minor changes:
- Please list all sub-analyses in methods (e.g. follow-up length, type lesions…)

Response: As suggested, all sub-analyses in methods have been listed in the revised manuscript (Page.6, Lines 10-12).

- Please summarize conclusions and for instance add the paragraph starting with “in addition” in the discussion. Conclusions have to be short.

Response: As suggested, we have shifted this part to the discussion and shortened the conclusion in the revised manuscript (Page.12, Lines 22-24; Page.13, Lines 1-8; Page 14, Lines 14-17).
Reviewer reports:

Francesco Gallo (Reviewer 1): In the revised paper the authors have done a lot of changes which have improved the quality of the manuscript. Firstly, they included more recent studies and modified the primary endpoints. Second: they removed the comparison between DEB+BMS Vs DES in the analysis. They did also more subgroup analysis and the authors's conclusions are more appropriate.

Response: We appreciated reviewer’s favorable comments on our revised manuscript.

Matteo Serenelli (Reviewer 2): The idea to compare the use of DEB over DES in coronary angioplasty is interesting but the work has some clear weakness and still has some little misconceptions.

For example

1) At page 3 row 9 you state that DES are not effective in treating diabetic patients with coronary artery stenosis, which i think is not true.

Response: Thanks for your thoughtful suggestion. We have reviewed some recent publications and reorganized the sentence in the revised manuscript with inclusion of some references to supporting this statement (Page.3, lines 9-11).

2) At page 11 row 18 you say that "pre-dilatation with a conventional balloon was not sufficient in the DEB grup". On what basis did you say that?

Response: Accordingly, we have added the pre-dilatation item in the table of Baseline characteristics. It showed that some studies did not perform pre-dilatation in both groups, while some other studies did not perform pre-dilatation in the DEB group on a sufficient number of patients compared to the DES group. We have also performed the analysis related to this issue, and observed no statistical difference between DEB group and control group.
3) In my opinion, one of the weaknesses of this study is that you did not collect enough population baseline characteristics, which may hide several possible biases, and the fact that heterogeneity of the coronary disease treated in the selected studies may lead to a decreased reliability of your results.

Response: As suggested, we have collected other baseline clinical data summarized in the Additional File 2, which was also described in the Result (Page 7, Lines 5-6). In addition, we have performed analysis among these data, which turned out to be no significant difference.

4) I do not think that it is methodologically correct to compare DEB only with DEB + BMS over DES in the same analysis.

Response: We have removed the comparison between DEB+BMS and DES in the revised manuscript, while we discussed a little the comparison between these two in the discussion section based on other published studies.