Author’s response to reviews

Title: COPING BETTER WITH HEALTH PROBLEMS AFTER A VISIT TO THE FAMILY PHYSICIAN: ASSOCIATIONS WITH PATIENTS AND PHYSICIANS CHARACTERISTICS

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Author’s response to reviews:

Dear Editor,

I apologize if my cover letter was insufficiently precise. I have now added few additional details and page and line numbers. I hope this new version of the cover letter will suit you and that our paper will be satisfactory to be published in BMC Family Practice.

Kind regards,

Dr Christine Cohidon

1. We note that the data analyzed in your study stem from the Swiss participation in the QUALICOPC study. Please could you clarify whether any permissions were required to access and use this data and clearly state who you obtained permission from in the Ethics approval and consent to participate section. If permission was not required please state this with an explanation.

We clarified this point by adding a sub-section “Permission to use the QUALICOPC data” in the “Declarations” section (p17, l 290-294) as follows: “In accordance with the contract (INT040-NC24) between the Netherlands Institute for Health Services Research (Nivel) and the national Coordinators of the study, each national coordinator was entitled to use his own national data. Dr Nicolas Senn was the national coordinator for Switzerland”.

2. In the Ethics approval and consent to participate section of the Declarations please clarify whether written or verbal consent was obtained from the patients. If verbal, please state the reason and whether the ethics committee approved this procedure.

This point was clarified in the Ethics approval and consent section (p17 l 286-288) as follows: “In accordance with the Ethics Committee and to the extent that no biomedical data were
collected, the physicians and the patients only provided their informed oral consent for their participation”.

3. Please also confirm whether informed consent, written or verbal, was obtained from the physicians and clearly state this in Ethics approval and consent to participate section. If verbal, please state the reason and whether the ethics committee approved this procedure. If the need for consent was waived by an IRB or is deemed unnecessary according to national regulations, please clearly state this, including the name of the IRB or a reference to the relevant legislation.

This point was clarified in the Ethics approval and consent section (p17 l 286-288) as follows: “In accordance with the Ethics Committee and to the extent that no biomedical data were collected, the physicians and the patients only provided their informed oral consent for their participation”.

4. In the Ethics approval and consent to participate section please clearly state the full name of the ethical review board which approved your study.

The complete name of the Ethics Committee “Commission cantonale Vaud d’éthique et de recherche sur l’être humain” is now mentioned in the Ethics approval and consent section (p17 l 284-285).

5. Consent for publication refers to consent for the publication of identifying images or other personal or clinical details of participants that compromise anonymity. Seeing as this is not applicable to your manuscript please state “Not Applicable” in this section.

We now mention “not applicable” in this section (p 17 l290)

6. Please provide a list of all the abbreviations used in the manuscript. This list should be placed just before the Declarations section. All abbreviations should still be defined in the text at first use.

A list of abbreviations is now provided, p 16

7. Unfortunately, there are some minor language issues throughout the manuscript. Such as “Although the design of the study that does not allow” (page 2, line 25). Please ensure that you have thoroughly checked your manuscript for any other language errors. We recommend that you ask a native English speaking colleague to help you copyedit the paper.

The manuscript has been edited by an English speaking colleague and we corrected several language mistakes.

8. Please ensure that the abstract in the system is also updated with any changes.
The abstract was checked.