Author’s response to reviews

Title: Study protocol for a multicenter randomized controlled trial to compare the efficacy of end-ischemic dual hypothermic oxygenated machine perfusion with static cold storage in preventing non-anastomotic biliary strictures after transplantation of liver grafts donated after circulatory death: DHOPE-DCD Trial

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Author’s response to reviews:
Dear Editors,

Please find the answers to the questions in the e-mail of December 4th below in a point-by-point manner.

1) We note that your manuscript methods reference an unpublished study where the Liver Assist has been used (van Rijn et al.). If this pertains to the now published article (https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/28394402) please ensure that you reference this study and any others that are of relevance and have been published since your submission.

Response: Thank you for this advice. We have adjusted the manuscript accordingly (see page 11).

2) Please clarify whether the study protocol has been amended since being peer-reviewed by the funding body, and, if so, please provide details of the amendments and reasons why these were implemented.

Response: There has been one amendment of the study protocol on September 6th 2018. The amendment concerns an adjustment in the sample size calculation which was requested by the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) in the United Kingdom. The MHRA requested the statistical test to be a two-sided test instead of an one-sided test. This did not lead to a change in total number of patients because we had previously incorrectly anticipated lost-to-follow up. Lost to follow-up was already accounted for in the incidence of NAS on which we based the sample size calculation (see page 14).

3) Please ensure that your manuscript title indicates that it is a study protocol.

Response: We have adjusted the title of the manuscript (see page 1)

4) We note the addition of an email address (hynek.mergental@uhb.nhs.uk) who is not listed as an author. Please remove if this is in error. To request a change in authorship, please download the 'Request for change in authorship form' which can be found here - http://www.biomedcentral.com/about/editorialpolicies#authorship. If relevant, please send the completed form to our editorial office BMCSeriesEditorial@biomedcentral.com.
Response: We have removed the email address as he is not an author (see page 1).

5) Please rename Design and Methods in the abstracts (both on the online submission system and manuscript) as Methods.

Response: We have adjusted the abstract according to your suggestion (see page 2).

6) Please provide a list of all participating sites in your study in the Methods. Currently, your manuscript methods direct the reader to your clinical trial registration page for a list of study sites; however, the registry does not include references to the King’s College or Birmingham sites. Although not a requirement for submission, you may wish to update the trial registration information for future reference.

Response: Thank you for the suggestion. We have updated the trial registration information and have added a list of trial sites the Methods sections (see page 14).

7) Please provide the names of all ethical committees and approval reference numbers associated with each participating centre, and append these to the ‘Ethics approval and consent to participate’ section of the Declarations.

Response: We have added a list of all ethical committees and approval reference numbers (see page 24).

8) Please remove duplicated information in the Authors’ information section of the Declarations as this is already detailed on the title page.

Response: We have removed this information (see page 25-26).

9) Please collate and place Figure Numbers/Titles/Legends in a dedicated section following the references.

Response: We have adjusted the manuscript following above mentioned request.

10) Please place tables (together with associated numbers, titles and legend) at the end of the manuscript.
Response: We have adjusted the manuscript following above mentioned request.

11) Please remove the attached SPIRIT Checklist as this was for our editorial records.
Response: We have removed the checklist.

12) 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.
Response: We have uploaded a clean version and a version with track changes due to point 2.

13) Unfortunately, there are some minor language issues within the manuscript. Please ensure that you have thoroughly checked your manuscript for any language errors.
Response: We have adjusted some minor language issues.

We hope these responses adequately addresses your concerns and we hope the manuscript is suitable for publication.

On behalf of all co-authors

Sincerely yours,

Rianne van Rijn, MD
Robert J. Porte, MD, PhD
PhD candidate
Professor of Surgery