Author’s response to reviews

Title: Clinical Characteristics Associated with the Onset of Delirium among Nursing Home Residents

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24 January 2018

Giuseppe Bellelli, M.D.

BMC Geriatrics

Dear Dr. Bellelli,

Re: Manuscript ID BGTC-D-17-00532R1: Clinical Characteristics Associated with the Onset of Delirium among Nursing Home Residents

Thank you very much for your response in regard to the above manuscript. We have now revised the manuscript and respond to the reviewers’ helpful suggestions as follows.
1. We have clarified consent information in the “ethics approval and consent to participate” section. Written consent was not obtained from participants given that the study solely used existing electronic clinical records (i.e., secondary use of health information). These same assessment records (i.e., MDS 2.0, MDS 3.0, and interRAI LTCF) are in common use in North America, Europe, and the Pacific Rim for public reporting, quality measurement, case mix and reimbursement, as well as research. As such, these data have been extensively studied for their psychometric properties (some of which we cite). Specific to our study, we have met all of the requirements for the secondary use of health information outlined in our provincial legislation (Province of Ontario Personal Health Information Protection Act, 2004, S.O. 2004, c. 3, Sched. A). Under the provisions set out in the legislation as well as research ethics, our study received full clearance from the Hamilton Integrated Research Ethics Board (project 0739–D), which is the research ethics board for McMaster University, St. Joseph’s Healthcare Hamilton and Hamilton Health Sciences.

2. No participant consent was required given that the data used in the study were from existing records. No resident/patient received had any deviation in care as a result of being included in our analyses. As outlined above, our study complied with relevant privacy legislation, and was reviewed and approved by our institutional research ethics board.

3. We clarified that the funding body has no role in the design of the study and collection, analysis, and interpretation of data and in writing the manuscript. We also removed funding information from the title page.

4. We have now put in the appropriate headings.

We have made every attempt to keep the additions requested by the reviewers as brief as possible.

We hope these changes will meet with your approval and look forward to your response in due course.
Yours sincerely,

Evelyn Ning Man Cheung, MD, MSc
Andrew P Costa, PhD