Author’s response to reviews

Title: PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND FITNESS ARE ASSOCIATED WITH VERBAL MEMORY, QUALITY OF LIFE AND DEPRESSION AMONG NURSING HOME RESIDENTS: PRELIMINARY DATA OF A RANDOMIZED CONTROLLED TRIAL

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PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND FITNESS ARE ASSOCIATED WITH VERBAL MEMORY, QUALITY OF LIFE AND DEPRESSION AMONG NURSING HOME RESIDENTS: PRELIMINARY DATA OF A RANDOMIZED CONTROLLED TRIAL

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BMC Geriatrics
Dear Dr. Anne-Marie Hill,

Thank you for the comments raised from the second review of the manuscript “PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND FITNESS ARE ASSOCIATED WITH VERBAL MEMORY, QUALITY OF LIFE AND DEPRESSION AMONG NURSING HOME RESIDENTS: PRELIMINARY DATA OF A RANDOMIZED CONTROLLED TRIAL” (BGTC-D-17-00526). We really appreciate the Editor comments and we have fully addressed them in a revised version of the manuscript (all changes are indicated in the text by highlighting). The point-by-point rebuttal follows below. We hope that the revised manuscript will be favorably considered for publication in BMC Geriatrics.

Sincerely,

Ana Rodriguez Larrad

Response to the Editor Comments:

Authors have improved the paper substantially, especially in the statistical analysis section and the discussion, please address the following specific areas prior to re-submission.

Abstract

1. For the reader spell out the RAVLt AT in the abstract you could just state Rey Auditory-Verbal Learning Test.

We have mention the RAVLt as Rey Auditory-Verbal Learning Test in the abstract in the new version of the manuscript.
2. For participants use “gender” in the abstract and throughout the manuscript not “sex”.
We replaced “sex” by “gender” all throughout the document.

3. State “muscle strength” throughout the abstract not “muscular” and also throughout the manuscript.
We agree with the reviewer and we used “muscle strength” instead of “muscular strength”.

4. Conclusion – leave out the words “this study is the first to describe” just state your conclusion which is “Muscle strength and physical activity are positively associated ……
We eliminated the words “this study is the first to describe” in the new version of the manuscript as requested.

5. Conclusion needs to incorporate “older adults with mild to moderate cognitive impairment living in nursing homes” as your population does not include all residents as over 60% of residents in nursing homes have cognitive impairment and many would have severe cognitive impairment.
We agree with the reviewer and we added the information suggested in the new version of the manuscript.

Limitations section

1. Please expand this section to discuss that you have taken a subsection of nursing home residents as you only enroll those who score ≥ 20 on the MEC-35 24 Test [22] (an adapted and validated version of the Mini Mental State Examination in Spanish). So mentions in this section that these results do not apply necessarily to those residents who don’t fit this criteria. Mention what level of impairment the cut point of 20 would indicate a person has in practical terms.
2. Same limitation mention for those who cannot walk 10 meters.

3. Please also discuss briefly why your population (206 potential participants) were all of such high function which indicates your homes are not representative of most nursing homes in developed countries where many more than 7 people would not be eligible to participate for one of the above two reasons.

We agree with the reviewer and we added the following sentence in the limitations section: “Third, the results cannot be directly applied to all the nursing home residents; we could not ascertain whether these results would apply to those who refused participation or did not fulfill the physical and cognitive inclusion criteria.”