Author’s response to reviews

Title: An interdisciplinary statement of scientific societies for the advancement of delirium care across Europe (EDA, EANS, EUGMS, COTEC, IPTOP/WCPT)

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Author’s response to reviews:

July 9th, 2019

Dear Editor,

We thank the Editor and the Reviewers for the excellent critiques of our manuscript titled, “An international interdisciplinary consensus for the advancement of delirium care across Europe
We believe that these revisions have improved the manuscript and the message for the readers.

Sincerely,

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Reviewer 2

Tammy Hshieh, M.D., M.P.H.: The authors address an important issue in delirium - the need for interdisciplinary collaboration in order to improve quality of care. With the revisions suggested by both reviewers, this manuscript is now stronger and highlights the need to risk stratify/flag high risk delirium patients. It also better highlights the need for multidisciplinary approach to delirium. The authors have now clarified that this is an expert consensus paper not a systematic literature review. The obstacles to delirium care in Europe are important and bear discussing/elaborating on further.

RESPONSE: we appreciate the Reviewer’s feedback. Given the request of Reviewer 3 we have modified the title as follows: “A European interdisciplinary statement of scientific societies for the advancement of delirium care across Europe (EDA, EANS, EUGMS, COTEC, IPTOP/WCPT)”
Reviewer 3:

GENERAL COMMENTS: The first impression of the manuscript was good, it is a topic of high interest in the field of geriatrics and multidisciplinary approaches for tackling older adults' problems are needed. Authors gathered a number of societies from different disciplines into looking at delirium and how care of individuals with this condition could be improved. This is certainly one of the strengths of the text. Since it was supposed to be a consensus, a methodology on how this consensus was reached was expected, such as how the literature was reviewed, how the members of the consensus were chosen, if the got together or if everything was done by distance, etc. There is an absolute absence on how this consensus was established. Furthermore, there is not a clear objective on what the consensus was about. These two problems (lack of methodology and unclear objective), are flaws of the work that should be addressed.

REQUESTED REVISIONS:

It is not stated as an objective, but it can be inferred that the objective was: "In this paper we advocate the interdisciplinary approach in the prevention..." However, there is no clear statement on what the consensus was for. Was it only a document, more of a "manifesto" of the societies involved? Agreeing on the fact that a multidisciplinary approach is needed in order to properly care for individuals with delirium, is not a consensus on that matter; and is far from a consensus if the recommendation on the actions needed to be taken in a certain region/continent in order to improve such care. So my suggestion is to actually include a clear objective of the manuscript, because this could be only a part of a bigger consensus that the reader doesn't understand and more information about it is needed. In the same vein, their is no clear methodology on how the consensus was performed, or if this is intended to be a narrative review? Or then again, a "manifesto" a position of the societies? A "task force" document? Report from a meeting? In its current form and without a clear methodology, this manuscript is not a consensus. Moreover, for any of the previously described types of manuscript, a strategy of literature research is needed. The introduction in particular lacks an up-to-date literature review, and therefore, it is composed of a number of facts about delirium that seem not to be part a logical sequence of a document. Or the authors are transcribing expert opinions? Again, unclear, and in need of clarification. Therefore the interpretation of what is written is on the one hand a summary of what is already known in a disordered arrangement (e.g., having the description of the barriers near the end of the manuscript and not at the beginning).

RESPONSE: we appreciate the opportunity to clarify the points raised by the Reviewer, which might be misleading for the Reader.
1) We understand that using the word “consensus” would require a more formal approach and this was not the objective of our paper. We have modified the title as follows: “A European interdisciplinary statement of scientific societies for the advancement of delirium care across Europe (EDA, EANS, EUGMS, COTEC, IPTOP/WCPT)”

2) We have modified the abstract as follows “The objective of this paper is to promote the interdisciplinary approach in the prevention and management of delirium as endorsed by a delirium society (European Delirium Association, EDA), a geriatrics society (European Geriatric Medicine Society, EuGMS), a nursing society (European Academy of Nursing Science, EANS), an occupational therapy society (Council of Occupational Therapists for European Countries, COTEC), and a physiotherapy society (International Association of Physical Therapists working with Older People of the World Confederation for Physical Therapy, IPTOP/WCPT).”

3) We have provided the most up to date reference for delirium guidelines (https://www.sign.ac.uk/sign-157-delirium.html) and we have modified the introduction as follows: “The most recent evidence-based guidelines, published in March 2019, and recent consensus statements recommend the prioritization of multicomponent nonpharmacological approached for the prevention and treatment of delirium.”

4) Finally, we understand that some of the information included in the introduction are not novel. However, given the nature of the paper we believe it is important to provide this information to the readers who will not be only geriatricians. Indeed, this is a multiprofessional collaboration and it is unfortunately known that occupational therapists and physical therapists are not well educated and trained on the management of delirium. Indeed on page 6 we specifically underline this concept “Although it is now recognized that the multiprofessional approach is key in the management of delirium there is still a wide gap on the knowledge and education concerning this geriatric syndrome. Previous surveys have mainly addressed the knowledge of delirium among geriatricians and nurses and only one survey has included a limited group of physical therapists.(32-34) Only, recently the application of occupational therapy has been specifically studied for delirium care.(35-37)”

ADDITIONAL REQUESTS/SUGGESTIONS:

a) The writing in addition to style correction, it should be checked for mistakes such as the one found in reference 49.
RESPONSE: we have checked the text as suggested.

b) A definition and distinction between interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary is advised instead of using both words interchangeably.

RESPONSE: we have changed the wording thought the manuscript.

c) The paper is referred in the title as "international" however, it has a clear regional focus in Europe.

RESPONSE: we have changed the title to “A European interdisciplinary statement of scientific societies for the advancement of delirium care across Europe (EDA, EANS, EUGMS, COTEC, IPTOP/WCPT)”

d) Also in the title, what is a "consensus collaboration"? Introduction should have a clear sequence, including what have other actual consensus stated about multidisciplinary approaches.

RESPONSE: we have further modified the introduction as follows “This paper will focus on 1) promoting, via the support of scientific societies, the interdisciplinary collaboration of physicians, nurses, physical and occupational therapists, although it is acknowledged that other members of staff could and should be involved in delirium care, i.e. clinical pharmacists, nutritionists, nursing assistants and, when available, family members and caregivers; 2) underlying the current obstacles of delirium care; and 3) approaching ways to improve delirium care across Europe.”

e) It is not clear if authors have rights to use the figures presented in the manuscript. I would delete the original figures, because are not that informative.

RESPONSE: besides the 4AT figures, we have personally created the figures included in the paper. The 4AT can be freely download at the https://www.the4at.com. We believe that the figures might help us in delivering the message of the paper. Therefore, we would like to keep them in the paper.