Author’s response to reviews

Title: Targeted next-generation sequencing identifies novel variants in candidate genes for Parkinson’s disease in Black South African and Nigerian patients

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Response to Editor's comments

Assistant Editor Comments:

1. Ethics approval

Please note that ethics approval should:

• Be Independent from the investigators or sponsors • Be Local - From the same institute, region or country in which the study took place • Cover all countries – for studies performed in multiple countries, appropriate ethical committee approval must be included for each country.

We require a clear, unambiguous statement of ethics committee approval:

• Specific project approval, not simply general guideline adherence • The full name and affiliation of each ethics committee • Not simply “the local IRB approved the study”

• Reference numbers if applicable

Please confirm whether your study was submitted to and approved by local ethics committees in both Nigeria and Cape Town and include a statement to this effect in the “Ethics approval and consent to participate” section of your Declarations. Please also ensure that the full names of the ethics committees are included in this statement.

If the need for ethics approval was waived by an Institutional Review Board (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.

Response: The statement under the “Ethics approval and consent to participate” section (page 15-16) has been amended to reflect that the study was submitted and approved by IRB boards in both South African and Nigeria. The names of the two IRB boards and the approval reference numbers are provided in this statement.
2. Competing interests

Currently, your competing interests statement is unclear.

Please note that a competing interest exists when the authors’ interpretation of data or presentation of information may be influenced by, or may be perceived to be influenced by, their personal or financial relationship with other people or organizations. Competing interests may be financial or non-financial. Authors should disclose any financial competing interests but also any non-financial competing interests that may cause them embarrassment if they were to become public after the publication of the manuscript.

If the authors have no competing interests, please include the statement “The authors declare that they have no competing interests” in the Competing interests section of your manuscript.

Response: The competing interest statement on page 16 has been rephrased.

3. Role of funding bodies

Please provide more details regarding the specific role of each of the funding bodies in your study. If the funding bodies only provided the financial means to allow the authors to carry out the study, please state “The funding bodies played no role in the design of the study and collection, analysis, and interpretation of data and in writing the manuscript” and include this statement in the Funding section of your manuscript.

However, if each of the funding bodies took part in the design of the study and collection, analysis, and interpretation of data, and the writing of the manuscript, this must be stated in the Competing Interests section of your manuscript.

Response: The funding bodies only provided financial support and did not play a role in the design, interpretation and writing of the manuscript. This statement has now been added at the end of the Funding section on page 18.
4. Figure S5

We note that you have included an in-text citation to “Figure S5”, however this figure is absent from your manuscript. If you wish to include this citation, please upload the figure into your manuscript and into the file inventory. However, if you do not wish to include this figure in your manuscript, please remove the in-text citation corresponding to “Figure S5” on page 12 of your manuscript.

Response: Our apologies, this was an error. The in-text citation was incorrect and should be ‘Figure S4’. This has now been corrected on page 12.

5. Figure S4

As per our submission guidelines, we require that all figures, tables and additional files be cited in the text in sequence in a manuscript. Figure S4 is currently not cited in your manuscript. Please ensure that it is appropriately cited within the main body of text in your manuscript.

Response: As noted above, the in-text citation on page 12, should be ‘Figure S4’ and this has now been corrected on page 12.

6. Figure S6

We note that you have included Figure 6D and Figure 6E in your manuscript in Additional file 11. Please include a figure legend for the figure, the remaining sub-figures (Figure 6A, 6B, 6C), and the relevant in-text citations.

Response: Thank you for the comment. This legend for this figure (actually Figure S4) has now been edited to refer more clearly to the sub-figures 4A to 4E.