Author’s response to reviews

Title: In search of potential predictors of erythropoiesis-stimulating agents (ESAs) hyporesponsiveness: a population-based study

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Author’s response to reviews:

Dear Editor,

Thank you for the opportunity to revise our manuscript (Manuscript Number: BNEP-D-18-00648R1) "In search of potential predictors of erythropoiesis-stimulating agents (ESAs) hyporesponsiveness: a population-based study". We have carefully addressed the issues you have raised.

Please find enclosed our itemized answers to yours comments. The text in the manuscript has been accordingly revised and highlighted as red font.

Yours sincerely and on behalf of the co-authors,

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Editor Comments:

1. Overlap


This overlap exists throughout the manuscript.

While we understand that you may wish to express some of the same ideas contained in these publications, please be aware that we cannot condone the use of text from previously published work. Please re-phrase these sections to minimise overlap.

AUTHOR'S ANSWER: As suggested by the Editor, we re-phrased some sections of this paper.

We also note your abstract has been uploaded here: https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1002/pds.4070

Please clearly state and cite this in your manuscript (below the Abstract section).

AUTHOR'S ANSWER: We thank the Editor for the suggestion; however, the mentioned abstract is different from the abstract of the manuscript in terms of methods (e.g. data sources (Treviso vs Treviso and Caserta databases), design (nested case-control study vs. cohort study), observational period (3 months after ID vs 6 months after ID)) and results.

2. Conclusions

Please add a “Conclusions” section after the “Discussion” section. This should state clearly the main conclusions of the research article and give a clear explanation of their importance and relevance.

AUTHOR'S ANSWER: As suggested, we added the “Conclusions” section.

3. Ethics
Please clarify if the ethics committee approved the study. Currently your statement suggests your study complied with their guidelines but does not clearly state that the committee actually approved the study. Please confirm in the ethics and consent to participate section of your declarations whether you received ethics approval for this study.

AUTHOR'S ANSWER: As reported in the “Ethics approval and consent to participate” section, this study was notified to the Ethical Committee of the Academic Hospital of Messina and of Treviso because, in Italy, observational studies do not need the approval, but just a notification to the Ethical Committee, according to the national law. We cited the national law “Ministero della Salute, Agenzia Italiana del Farmaco (AIFA). Circolare AIFA del 3 agosto 2007. Linee guida per la classificazione e conduzione degli studi osservazionali sui farmaci. http://xoomer.virgilio.it/pgiuff/osservazionali.pdf.” (Ref. N. 31).

4. Author contributions

Please represent authors' names using their initials, not their full name, in the Authors’ Contributions section of your Declarations. If there are any duplicated initials, please differentiate them to make it clear that the initials refer to separate authors.

AUTHOR'S ANSWER: As suggested, we substituted full names of the authors with their initials, in the Authors’ Contributions section.

5. Response letter

please remove this additional file.

AUTHOR'S ANSWER: We removed this file.

6. Cite all figures, tables and additional files

Please ensure that all figures/tables and supplementary files are cited within the text. Any items which are not cited may be deleted by our production department upon publication.

AUTHOR'S ANSWER: We cited all figures, tables and additional files.

7. Clean manuscript

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.
Please remove any files that should not be published along with your manuscript e.g. cover letters, reviewer responses, guidelines etc., ready for publication.

AUTHOR’S ANSWER: As suggested, we submitted clean manuscript, with tables/figures/additional files.

BMC Nephrology operates a policy of open peer review, which means that you will be able to see the names of the reviewers who provided the reports via the online peer review system. We encourage you to also view the reports there, via the action links on the left-hand side of the page, to see the names of the reviewers.

PEER REVIEWER COMMENTS:

GENERAL COMMENTS: Yes, the authors responded adequately.

In Table 1, p-values were deleted. However, it seems to me that lines 49 to 50 on page 4 should be edited/deleted accordingly.

AUTHOR’S ANSWER: As suggested by the reviewer, we removed the sentence “Continuous and categorical variables were compared across indication for use at baseline using t-test or Chi-Square test for continuous and categorical variables, respectively”.

ADDITIONAL REQUESTS/SUGGESTIONS:

a) Authors should not only address the question of model fit, but also report goodness of fit statistic such as Hosmer-Lemeshow test of the models in the main content.

AUTHOR’S ANSWER: As requested by the reviewer, as follows, we reported the goodness of fit results (CKD: Chi Squared=8.70, P-value=0.365; Nagelkerke R2= 0.132; Cancer: Chi Squared=14.19, P=0.077; Nagelkerke R2= 0.089) indicating that estimated and observed odds of the dependent variables were consistent between them.

b) Line 53 of page 4: suggest edit the sentence as follows: As covariates, all the potential predictors of ESA responsiveness identified from the database, including age, ......

By restricting potential predictors to all those factors [identified from the database], reduce the likelihood of an overstatement.

AUTHOR’S ANSWER: As suggested by the reviewer, we modified the sentence at lines 44-51 of page 4 and lines 1-3 of page 5.