Author’s response to reviews

Title: Strengthening health data on a rare and heterogeneous disease: Sarcoma incidence and histological subtypes in Germany

Authors:
Meike Ressing (ressing@uni-mainz.de)
Eva Wardelmann (eva.wardelmann@ukmuenster.de)
Peter Hohenberger (peter.hohenberger@umm.de)
Jens Jakob (jens.jakob@umm.de)
Bernd Kasper (bernd.kasper@umm.de)
Katharina Emrich (emrich@krebsregister-rlp.de)
Andrea Eberle (eberle@leibniz-bips.de)
Maria Blettner (blettner-sekretariat@uni-mainz.de)
Sylke Zeissig (zeissig@krebsregister-rlp.de;zeissig@uni-mainz.de)

Version: 1 Date: 20 Oct 2017

Author’s response to reviews:

Dear Editors,

We would like to thank you and the reviewers very much for considering our manuscript for publication in BMC Public Health. Please find below our responses to the reviewer’s comments. The changes in the manuscript are indicated via track changes. The changes resulted in part in new formatting and line numbering, which is accounted for in our replies.

Technical Comments:

Editor Comments:
Results

• Please include lower and upper 95% confidence intervals for data shown on page 8, line 239 (7.4 vs 6.6) Please include lower and upper 95% confidence intervals for age-standardised rates shown in Table 2 for men and women

We included the confidence intervals as indicated, now lines 241/2.

• On page 11, line 294, please revise to describe the rate of incidence increase using the APC and the 95% confidence intervals, e.g. the rate of increase was much higher in men than women.

We included the APCs and the confidence intervals as indicated (now lines 298 to 303).

Discussion

• Page 14, line 347 (now lines 353/4), please also describe other potential explanatory factors.

As only the incidence of GIST changed significantly from the year 2004 to the year 2013, we cannot think of other causes for the change in incidence of all sarcoma. We explained at length possible reasons for the change in incidence of GIST.

Reviewer reports:
Young-Joo Won (Reviewer 1): The paper is well written and the methodology appears to be adequate.

<Specific comments>
1. European standard population should be clearly indicated which one was used (1976 or 2013).

We now indicated that the European Standard Population is from 1976 in the method section (page 8, line 217) and in headings of. tables and figures.

2. Please follow the author's guideline of BMC cancer.(e.g. Literature, British English?)
We now spell tumour and behavior with “u” and to analyse with “s”. We could not find any other American English spelling. The literature is formatted as described in the authors guideline of BMC cancer.

3. What is "T" in the table 1 and the draft?

ICD-O-3-T means Topography, ICD-O-3 M means Morphology. We explained this now in table 1 and in the draft (page 7, lines 192 and 195).

In addition to the Editor’s comments, we corrected one mistake in table 1 and two mistakes in the Additional table 2. We now consistently use the German word Nordrhein-Westfalen for Northrhine-Westfalia.

Again, thank you very much for your review.

Kind regards,
Sylke Ruth Zeissig, on behalf of all co-authors