Author’s response to reviews

Title: Effects of a long-term home-based exercise training programme using minimal equipment vs. usual care in COPD patients: A study protocol for two multicentre randomised controlled trials (HOMEX-1 and HOMEX-2 trials)

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Author’s response to reviews:

Dear Dr. Devoto

Thank you for your response on our submitted manuscript PULM-D-18-00604 "Effects of a long-term home-based exercise training programme using minimal equipment vs. usual care in COPD patients: A study protocol for two multicentre randomised controlled trials (HOMEX-1 and HOMEX-2 trials)".

Please find below our answers to the editor’s comments. We sincerely hope that our answers clarify the raises issues and thank you for considering this manuscript.

With kind regards,

Anja Frei
Editor's comments:

1) As Figures 2 and 3 are not in English, these should be removed or replaced with translated versions.

Our response: Since we cannot translate the Figures into English (these are copies of the original study material which are in German), we removed them from the manuscript. We therefore submitted a new version of the manuscript with the references to the figures removed.

2) Thank you for confirming that the study protocol has been peer reviewed by the funding bodies. Can you please clarify whether any changes have been made to the study protocol since peer review. If so, please outline what these changes have been.

Our response: For HOMEX-1 (peer review by funding body Lungenliga Schweiz), we supplemented the inclusion criteria with the criterion “Completion of an inpatient or outpatient pulmonary rehabilitation (PR) no longer than 1 months ago” after the study protocol has been reviewed by the funding bodies. We originally submitted the study protocol of HOMEX-1 to the funding body without this specification but planned to include both patient-groups, those who conducted PR and those who did not conduct PR. After we received the funding, we finally decided that it is more appropriate for our research question to study these two groups separately. We decided to focus on post-PR patients in HOMEX-1 and to conduct a second trial, HOMEX-2, where we focus on those patients only who did not participate in an inpatient or outpatient PR within the last two years.

For HOMEX-2, we did not change anything after peer review by the funding body.

3) Thank you for providing proof of funding and ethics proofs. However, several of these are not in English. Please could you provide translated versions of the relevant parts. These should be endorsed and signed by a contactable person at the institution. Please also include the original documents. Can you please confirm in your cover letter that you have forwarded the requested documentation to BMCSeriesEditorial@biomedcentral.com.

Our response: We confirm that we have sent all original documents and translations of the relevant parts, signed by me, to BMCSeriesEditorial@biomedcentral.com (we already sent the original documents to Erica.Cruz@springernature.com after our first submission).
These documents are:

- Funding approval HOMEX-1 (in English; no translation)
- Funding approval HOMEX-2 and translation of the relevant part
- Ethics approval main centre Zurich and translation of the relevant part
- Ethics approval site Barmelweid and translation of the relevant part
- Ethics approval site Bern and translation of the relevant part