Author’s response to reviews

Title: DEFENDD trial: Dynamic Locking Blade Plate (DLBP) versus Dynamic Hip Screw (DHS) for displaced femoral neck fractures in patients 65 years of age and younger. Study protocol for a randomized controlled trial

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Author’s response to reviews:

Deventer, 02 January 2020

Dr. C. M. Fitzpatrick
Editor
BMC Musculoskeletal Disorders

Manuscript title: ‘DEFENDD trial: Dynamic Locking Blade Plate (DLBP) versus Dynamic Hip Screw (DHS) for displaced femoral neck fractures in patients 65 years of age and younger. Study protocol for a randomized controlled trial.’
Manuscript number: BMSD-D-19-00953.

Dear dr. Fitzpatrick,

We thank you and the reviewers for the extensive and thorough evaluation of our manuscript. Your constructive remarks helped us to improve the manuscript. Please find below our point-to-point response on your and the reviewers’ comments.

We hope that our response to the reviewers answers theirs questions and will clarify some misunderstanding about the content of the manuscript. Based on your feedback and that of the reviewers, we revised the manuscript on some points. We hope that the revised manuscript is suitable for publication in BMC Musculoskeletal Disorders.

Yours sincerely, on behalf of all authors,
Jorn Kalsbeek, MSc
Response to the comments of the Editor and Reviewers

Response to the Editor’s Comments:

1. Ensure copyright permission is stated in each Figure's legend.
J.H. Kalsbeek: we emailed the AOfoundation for permission to use figure 1. As soon as we get a response we will add a statement. We added a copyright statement to the figure 2.

2. In the methods section - the heading dynamic is misspelt.
J.H. Kalsbeek: Thank you for bringing this to our attention. It is corrected.

Editor: Some of the Reviewer's comments are misplaced due to their misunderstanding that your submission was a study protocol. Please consider all comments and respond to their appropriately within the realms of the reach of a study protocol.
J.H.Kalsbeek: We adjusted the title of the manuscript slightly to make it more clear that we present a study protocol of a RCT. New title is: ‘DEFENDD trial: Dynamic Locking Blade Plate (DLBP) versus Dynamic Hip Screw (DHS) for displaced femoral neck fractures in patients 65 years of age and younger. Study protocol for a randomized controlled trial.’

Response to the comments of Reviewer #1):

J.H. Kalsbeek: we thank dr. Inam for his time to evaluate our manuscript thoroughly. Yet I’m afraid there is a misunderstanding about the content of this manuscript. The manuscript concerns the study protocol of a randomized controlled trial. The trial is running at the moment in six hospitals in the Netherlands; so no results can yet be published. We aim to publish this protocol in order to inform clinicians and researchers involved in this area of trauma care. We also value the transparency that publication of the study protocol provides. We addressed your questions and comments below.

1. i dont know whats is the abreviation of the DEFENDD protocol.
J.H. Kalsbeek: DEFENDD is the acronym for: DisplacEd Femoral Neck fractures Dlbp versus Dhs. We have added this clarification in the Abstract (page 2) and in the Methods section (page 4).

2. this seems to be a synopsis or research protocol as all the language used was in future tense.
J.H. Kalsbeek: That is correct.

3. meterial and method needs revision.
J.H. Kalsbeek: We assume that this comment is due to the fact that we did not make it sufficiently clear that our paper concerns a study protocol. In drafting this study protocol, we followed the SPIRIT guidelines for protocols of clinical trials as best as possible. According to these guidelines, the Method section must include an elaborate and complete description of the study design.
4. Discussion needs elaboration.
J.H. Kalsbeek: As this manuscript describes a study protocol, the Discussion section is brief.

5. There is no conclusion
J.H. Kalsbeek: As this manuscript describes a study protocol, no conclusion can be formulated.

6. I would suggest to read a paper that you have put in the references and also see the submission criterion of the journal
J.H. Kalsbeek: In our references, we have only included papers that are relevant to the study protocol of our trial. In preparing the manuscript, we followed the Journal’s author instructions for study protocols (https://bmcmusculoskeletdisord.biomedcentral.com/submission-guidelines/preparing-your-manuscript/study-protocol)

Response to comments of Reviewer #2):

J.H. Kalsbeek: We thank Dr. Yu for his feedback on our manuscript. Yet we think there is a misunderstanding about the content of this manuscript. We assume that the comments are caused by the fact that we did not make it sufficiently clear that our paper concerns a study protocol.

1. In the abstract, I did not directly see the results of the article, which made it difficult for me to be interested in the following reading.
J.H. Kalsbeek: As the manuscript is a study protocol of an ongoing trial, no results can be published as yet.

2. The authors compared DLBP and DHS, however there are many articles have been published, and the conclusion is the same, so there's no innovation for this study.
J.H. Kalsbeek: As stated in this study protocol, only a few studies on the Dynamic Locking Blade Plate have been published, and all of these studies were non-randomized cohort trials. Randomized Controlled Trials are needed to provide high-level evidence to determine whether the outcome of the Dynamic Locking Blade Plate is more favourable compared to other internal fixation devices.

Response to comments of Reviewer 3):

This is a study protocol for a proposed randomised controlled trial. As such there can be no specific comments and it is entirely up to the editorial policy of this journal as to whether they wish to publish such protocols. The article as such is well written and it is up to the trialists regarding their study methods, inclusion and exclusion criteria. This is not therefore not an acceptance or rejection.
J.H. Kalsbeek: We thank you for reading our manuscript and we are pleased to hear you think the article is well written.