Author’s response to reviews

Title: Assessing skin disease and associated health-related quality of life in a rural Lao community

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Author’s response to reviews:

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Dr Alexander Zink
Editorial Office
BMC Dermatology
15th November, 2018
Dear Dr Zink,

I am pleased to present our resubmission of our original research article entitled Assessing skin disease and associated health-related quality of life in Laos for consideration for publication in BMC Dermatology. The minor revisions requested have been completed. Please see my replies to the specific issues raised below. All tracked changes have been removed from the manuscript.

Once again, many thanks for considering this article for publication in BMC Dermatology.

Yours sincerely,

Catriona

BDER-D-18-00035R2

Assessing skin disease and associated health-related quality of life in a rural Lao community

Catriona Wootton, MBChB; Sarah Bell; Ammala Philavanh; Khampasith Phommachack; Mick Soukavong; Sonexai Kidoikhammouan; Stephen Walker; Mayfong Mayxay

BMC Dermatology

1. Please reformat the Abstract so that it follows our submission guidelines, which can be found here: https://bmcdermatol.biomedcentral.com/submission-guidelines/preparing-your-manuscript/research-article

The Abstract should not exceed 350 words. Please minimize the use of abbreviations and do not cite references in the abstract. The abstract must include the following separate sections:

Background: the context and purpose of the study

Methods: how the study was performed and statistical tests used

Results: the main findings

Conclusions: brief summary and potential implications
2. We note that in the methods section of your manuscript, you state that: "Participants gave verbal informed consent and were asked a brief series of questions about themselves and whether they had had any problems with their skin, hair or nails in the past year".

As verbal consent was obtained, please clarify why consent was obtained in this manner and confirm whether the ethics committee approved this procedure.

Verbal consent was approved by the Ethics committee given the low level of literacy in the community. Culturally there is a reticence to sign official documents which may have led to difficulties in getting consent forms completed. And the aim was to be as paper-free as possible.

This has been added to the document.

3. We note that some of the participants included in your study were under the age of 16. please could you clarify whether consent to participate was obtained from the parents and/or legal guardians of those under the age of 16.

Verbal consent was given by parents or legal guardians for participants under 16 years; words to this effect have been added to the manuscript.

4. We would also like to ask for you to provide more justification for the contributions of SB, AP, MS and SK, as currently they do not automatically qualify for authorship. Contribution to data collection, alone, does not usually justify authorship.

An 'author' is generally considered to be someone who has made substantive intellectual contributions to a published study. According to the ICMJE guidelines, to qualify as an author one should have:

a) made substantial contributions to conception and design, or acquisition of data, or analysis and interpretation of data; AND

b) been involved in drafting the manuscript or revising it critically for important intellectual content; AND

c) given final approval of the version to be published. Each author should have participated sufficiently in the work to take public responsibility for appropriate portions of the content; AND
d) agreed to be accountable for all aspects of the work in ensuring that questions related to the accuracy or integrity of any part of the work are appropriately investigated and resolved.

Anyone listed as an author must be included in this section. If you choose to change your author list you will need to fill out a change in authorship form and send it by email to the Editorial office to be approved by the Editor. The form can be found here: https://www.biomedcentral.com/getpublished/editorial-policies#authorship.

Anyone who contributed towards the article who does not meet the criteria for authorship can be acknowledged in the ‘Acknowledgements’ section.

The author contributions were not correct and I have adjusted them appropriately.

5. Please include a statement in the Authors’ contributions section to the effect that all authors have read and approved the manuscript, and ensure that this is the case.

All authors have read and approved the manuscript, words have been added to that effect.

6. We note that your supplementary images are not cited within the main text of your manuscript.

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.

All supplementary images and tables are now cited in the main text.

7. Please provide figure titles/legends under a separate heading of 'Figure Legends' after the References. If Figure titles/legends are within the main text of the manuscript, please move them.

The image legends have been listed under a separate heading beneath the references.

8. 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.