Author’s response to reviews

Title: Effect of oral functional training on immunological abilities of older people: a case control study

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Author’s response to reviews:

To the Reviewer: Thank you for the time and effort you put into your review. Your invaluable comments and suggestions helped improve our manuscript immensely.

Reviewer:

1. Your study falls within the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE)’ definition of a clinical trial: any research study that prospectively assigns human subjects to one or more health related interventions to evaluate the effects on health or biological outcomes. As such, Biomed Central requires that a Trial Registration Number is provided in order for the manuscript to be published.

Although a TRN is usually required prior to the start of the peer-review process, the BMC-series journals does accept retrospectively registered trials. If you have not registered the trial, we therefore request that you do so as soon as possible so that your study can be accepted for publication. All trials must be registered with an ICMJE approved registry, as listed in the ICMJE guide: http://www.icmje.org/faq.pdf.

Once you know your trial registration number, please submit a revised version of your manuscript with the number and date of registration included in the abstract. The last section of the abstract should be Trial Registration: listing the trial registry and the unique identifying number, e.g. Trial registration: Current Controlled Trials ISRCTN73824458, as well as the date of registration. Please note that there should be no space between the letters and numbers of the
trial registration number. If registration took place after the first participant was enrolled, please state also “Retrospectively registered” at the end of this section.

Response: Thank you for your comments. We have accordingly registered our protocol. The information about the registration is in two places: at the end of the Abstract and in the Participants subsection of the Methods section.

“Trial registration: UMIN-CTR Clinical Trial UMIN000028394 (27 July 2017, retrospectively registered).” (page 4, lines 58-59)

“This study was retrospectively registered as a University Hospital Medical Information Network Clinical Trials Registry (UMIN-CTR) Clinical Trial (Unique Trial Number: UMIN000028394) on 27 July 2017.” (page 6, lines 109-111)

2. In the Methods section please could you provide more information regarding the recruitment of participants including where they were recruited from.

Response: Thank you for your comments. Accordingly, we added the information requested in the Participants subsection of the Methods section.

“All participants were recruited consecutively from the Oasis Geriatric Health Services facilities. Subjects were included in the study if they had no acute disease, demonstrated distinct consciousness, and could communicate. Subjects with xerostomia were excluded from the study.” (page 7, lines 115-118)

3. I'm afraid the quality of the English used throughout your manuscript does not currently meet our requirements. We recommend that you ask a native English speaking colleague to help you copyedit the paper. If this is not possible, you may need to use a professional language editing service. Use of an editing service is neither a requirement nor a guarantee of acceptance for publication.

Response: Thank you for your comments. The revised manuscript has been edited by a professional native-English speaker.

4. Please provide a list of all the abbreviations used in the manuscript. This list should be placed just before the Declarations section. All abbreviations should still be defined in the text at first use.
Response: Thank you for your comments. We have added a list of abbreviations to the revised manuscript just before the Declarations section. Each abbreviation is also defined at first use in the text.

“Abbreviations

BMI, body mass index; ELISA, enzyme-linked immunosorbent assay; IgA, immunoglobulin A; RSD, relative standard deviation; SD, standard deviation” (page 15, lines 331-332)

5. Please remove the figure titles embedded within the figures. All figure titles/legends should be placed at the end of the main manuscript, after the References, and not within any of the figure files.

Response: Thank you for your advice. Accordingly, we removed the embedded titles from the figures.

6. Please submit your revised manuscript as a clean copy without any tracked changes, coloured or highlighted text, as these are no longer required at this stage of the editorial process.

Response: Thank you. In accordance with the reviewer’s comments, we are submitting a clean copy.