Author’s response to reviews

Title: Relationship between oral environment and frailty among older adults dwelling in a rural Japanese community: A cross-sectional observational study

Authors:

Yoko Hasegawa (cem17150@dent.niigata-u.ac.jp)
Ayumi Sakuramoto (ayu.cherry.ayu@gmail.com)
Hideyuki Sugita (hi-sugita@hyo-med.ac.jp)
Kana Hasegawa (ka-hasegawa@hyo-med.ac.jp)
Nobuhide Horii (no-horii@hyo-med.ac.jp)
Takashi Sawada (ahfb4801@bca.bai.ne.jp)
Ken Shinmura (ke-shimmura@hyo-med.ac.jp)
Hiromitsu Kishimoto (kishihiro@hyo-med.ac.jp)

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Author’s response to reviews:

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Dr. Shenuka Singh
Editor
BMC Oral Health

Dear Editor,

We are resubmitting our revised manuscript, titled “Relationship between oral environment and frailty among older adults dwelling in a rural Japanese community: A cross-sectional observational study” (OHEA-D-18-00353R3) by Yoko Hasegawa, Ayumi Sakuramoto, Hideyuki Sugita, Kana Hasegawa, Nobuhide Horii, Takashi Sawada, Ken Shinmura, and Hiromitsu Kishimoto for publication as an original report in BMC Oral Health.
We are grateful to the reviewers for their time, effort, thoughtful suggestions, and insightful recommendations, which we believe have greatly improved our manuscript. All authors have addressed the reviewers’ comments and have subsequently performed extensive revision to the structure and content of the manuscript.

Thus, the revised manuscript represents a comprehensive revision, as suggested by the reviewers. We feel that these changes have improved the quality and style of this report, and we hope that it is now suitable for publication in your journal. Please find our responses (indicated in blue) to the reviewers’ points in the response letter.

I certify that all of the co-authors agree with the revisions of this manuscript.

Respectfully yours,

Yoko Hasegawa
Division of Comprehensive Prosthodontics
Niigata University Graduate School of Medical and Dental Sciences
5274, Gakkocho-dori 2-bancho, Chuo-ku, Niigata, 951-8514 Japan
Tel: +81-25-227-2891
Fax:+81-25-229-3454
mail: cem17150@dent.niigata-u.ac.jp

Point-by-point response to reviewer
Thank you for your careful review.

P2L19
Repetition
—We have revised this text.
We have revised this text.

Add a short description of this level, for readers who are unaware of this care insurance system.

We have included an explanation of the long-term care insurance system implemented by the Ministry of Health, Labor, and Welfare as a reference.

Explain this briefly. Who was blinded?

- All personally identifiable information and data were anonymized for this study. Accordingly, the authors did not have access to the participants' personal information. We have added this information to the text (P4L23).

Mention: This questionnaire was not previously validated in this community

- Although we did not validate the questionnaire for this survey, we are currently collecting relevant data and plan to study this issue in the future. We have mentioned this in the text according to your suggestion.

Restructure this sentence. Essentially you are reporting that:

All participants provided written informed consent before the questionnaire was administered. Participants were informed of their right to withdraw from the study at any point, without any negative consequences or loss of privileges.

- We have revised these sentences according your suggestion.
mention the time of day here.
- We have included this information as per your request.

P6L9

Explain how you validated the questionnaire
- We have added a statement indicating that we did not validate the KCL questionnaire in this survey (see the “Diagnosis of frailty” section). We note that the validity of the KCL was confirmed in the “Edmonton Frail Scale” for the accurate assessment of patient frailty.

P7L13

I would be cautious with this sentence. Rather state that the KCL has added value to the Edmonton Frail Scale....
- We revised this sentence according to your suggestion.

P7L21-22

Your original sentence was fine. There is no need for change here.
- We have restored this sentence to the original form.

P7L25

Please look at other literature as well. This explanation is too simplistic and suggests a causal relationship when in reality, this is a very complex process.

Note that dental calculus is inert. It is the complex matrices of oral microflora that contribute to increased risk for oral diseases.
- According your suggestion, we have mentioned that the complex oral microflora matrix can contribute to an increased risk of oral disease.
Are you referring to your study here?
- No. Rather, we referred to the general theory. The language in this area has been corrected.

Check this sentence for grammar and coherence
- We have revised these sentences as indicated.

Use another word: medications for parental use?
- We do not understand the meaning of "parental use". We have revised the text to "medications used internally."

Studies
- We have revised this text.