Author’s response to reviews

Title: Opening Clinical Trial Data: Are The Voluntary Data Sharing Portals Enough?

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Author’s response to reviews:

Prof. Sabina Alam, Editor-in-Chief
BMC Medicine

Dear Prof. Alam,

Attached is the revised commentary for your consideration, titled “Opening Clinical Trial Data: Are The Voluntary Data Sharing Portals Enough?”. Below we address each of the review comments; changes to the text were highlighted using the track-changes tool.

Reviewer #1:

This commentary addresses an important issue that should be of broad interest to the BMC Medicine audience. I have a few recommendations for revisions. As the authors indicate, this field is evolving, so it would be helpful to include information about when these requests for data were made, including month and year. Detailed information is provided for timelines with respect to the data platform available through the clinicalstudydatarequest.com website, but for the Project Data Sphere database (available through the website, projectdatasphere.org), there is simply a general comment that it was "faster"; it would be important to include similar details about timelines.

We would like to thank the reviewer for this useful suggestion. We have added specific details regarding timelines to the manuscript (page 3).

The authors refer to the Immunology Database and Analysis Portal (ImmPort) as an example of an effective platform, but the authors should here again provide details about the process - what
is required to download the data? Similar information should be provided across the three examples about the accessibility and adequacy of data.

Thank you for pointing this out; a sentence describing the process of accessing ImmPort data as well as its usability was added to the text (page 4).

Among the recommendations is one to develop "a scheme to increase industry's motivation for data sharing, rewarding companies that make data readily accessible and covering the costs of this process should also be considered". It would be useful to elaborate on how companies would be "rewarded".

We would like to again thank the reviewer for this helpful suggestion. We have elaborated on this point in the text (page 4).

Reference #6 is incomplete; it should appear as "Institute of Medicine (IOM). 2015. Sharing clinical trial data: Maximizing benefits, minimizing risk. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press." On page 4, line 10, "publicly" is misspelled; on line 24, the phrase should be revised to "…agreed-upon protocol…".

We would like to thank the reviewer for pointing out these mistakes; these have all been corrected.

------------------------Editorial Suggestion------------------------

Heading- We suggest that you consider changing the heading 'Main Text' to something more descriptive. This will improve the style of the Commentary.

Thank you for the suggestion, we have changed the heading to: “Our experience in the pursuit of open clinical data”.

Thank you for considering our manuscript for publication,

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