Author’s response to reviews

Title: NON-RADIOGRAPHIC METHODS OF MEASURING GLOBAL SAGITTAL BALANCE: A SYSTEMATIC REVIEW.

Authors:

Larry Cohen (lcoh0894@uni.sydney.edu.au; larry.cohen@technotherapy.com.au)

Sarah Kobayashi (skob9241@uni.sydney.edu.au)

Milena Simic (milena.simic@sydney.edu.au)

Sarah Dennis (sarah.dennis@sydney.edu.au)

Kathryne Refshauge (kathryn.refshauge@sydney.edu.au)

Evangelos Pappas (evangelos.pappas@Sydney.edu.au)

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Author’s response to reviews:

Dear editor,

Thank you for considering our manuscript submission and your email of 17 April 2017 containing your reviewers comments.

We have reproduced the reviewer comments below and our amended discussion text (in quotation marks)

Reviewer #1: Taking into account all the limitations posed by the referred papers/works, this paper reflects the common understanding and expectations of the non-radiographic methods. The paper puts all these into a comprehensive framework. Two points are noted: a/ the time of publication is of importance, especially for the technology-based methods, since technological evolution makes results not directly compatible to previous ones, and certainly much more accurate.

"We stress the importance of publication date, especially for the technology-based methods, since progressive technological evolution limits comparison of results and accuracy between and within advancing methods."
b/ not all scoliotic parameters can be measured with the same accuracy/reliability, thus "sagittal balance" is not always a directly measured variable, sometimes being an in-direct variable. This makes the direct comparison of various methods sometimes vague. It is suggested that the authors address these issues in the Discussion section.

"Not only are our results confounded by the inconsistent selection of superior and inferior landmarks between our studies, not all sagittal balance parameters can be measured with the same accuracy and reliability. Furthermore, the surrogate outcomes provided by non-radiographic measurement raises a question whether manually palpated surface landmarks accurately correlate with radiographic landmarks."

Yours sincerely

Larry Cohen