Author’s response to reviews

Title: Biodegradable vascular stents and drug-eluting stents in treatment of coronary heart disease: a meta analysis

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Author’s response to reviews:

Dear Editor

Thank you for your letter and for the reviewers’ comments concerning our manuscript. Those comments are all valuable and very helpful for revising and improving our paper, as well as the important guiding significance to our research. We have studied comments carefully and have completed all the revision. The main corrections in the paper and the responses to the editor and reviewer’s comments are as flowing:

REVIEWER 1

1. Reviewer #1: It is a good in-depth combined analysis of published studies. DES is found to be far more superior to BVS.

Answer: Many thanks for the reviewer’s praise and recognition.
REVIEWER 2

Major points:

1. The major limitation of this study is the omission of key trials performed within the time period, namely Absorb III (Ellis et al. N Engl J Med 2015; 373:1905-1915) and Absorb IV (Stone et al. The Lancet. 2018; 392;1530-1540). I am unclear why these were not included as they are by far the largest RCTs in this area. Together 2 trials these include over 4600 patients - almost 3-fold greater than those included in the current meta-analysis. Was there a methodological reason these trials were excluded?

   ANSWER: Many thanks for the reviewer’s very useful suggestion. After fully evaluating Absorb III and Absorb IV studies, we are sorry to say that we missed these two important studies in our previous inclusion process. In our revised manuscript, we have re-added these two studies to our meta-analysis. So, finally, a total of 10 studies with more than 6000 patients are included. The result is still higher rates of target lesion failure, stent thrombosis and cardiac death with the BVS in comparison with DES.

2. I struggled to understand the content of para 1 in the introduction. The discussion is far too short and should be expanded to discuss findings, limitations, and perhaps consider benefits/pitfalls of alternative absorbable scaffold strategies

   ANSWER: Thanks for the reviewer’s kindly reminding. We have rewritten the first paragraph and the discussion part to express more clearly and logically.

3. Although other bioabsorbable scaffolds exist on the market, none of the others have been tested in RCTs. The authors should make clear that the meta-analysis deals solely with the Absorb BVS, albeit different generations of scaffold

   ANSWER: It is true as the reviewer suggested that studies included in our meta-analysis are all about Absorb BVS and should be emphasized in the manuscript. We have emphasized this limitation in our paper according to the reviewer’s suggestion. Thanks for the reviewer’s kindly reminding.

Minor point:

1 The hypothesis is not novel and has been examined by others Zair et al. Circ 2018;137:464-479.
Answer: Thanks for the reviewer’ judgement. The paper by Zair et al is a meta-analysis which only includes ABSORB trials. Our meta-analysis included much more studies and larger sample size than that, which can provide more solid evidence.

2. The article requires some grammatical and syntax correction.

Answer: Thanks for the reviewer’ advice. We have carefully checked our manuscript and also invited native English-speaking colleague to help improve and polish our paper’s language. We believe in that it will meet the journal’s language standards.

We have tried our best to improve the manuscript and made revisions in the manuscript. We appreciate for Editors/Reviewers’ warm work earnestly, and hope that the correction will meet with approval. Once again, thank you very much for your comments and suggestions. We hope that the revision is acceptable and look forward to hearing from you soon.

Best Regards