Author's response to reviews

Title: An evaluation of seasonal variations in footwear worn by adults with inflammatory arthritis: a cross-sectional observational study using a web-based survey

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Version: 3 Date: 13 July 2014

Author's response to reviews: see over
Dear Dr Bowen

Re: MANUSCRIPT 1232127092131198 - An evaluation of seasonal variations in footwear worn by adults with inflammatory arthritis: a cross-sectional observational study using a web-based survey

I am writing in response to the second review of this manuscript to address the remaining editorial comments. Please find below my responses.

1. Abstract: Please ensure that the abstract of the manuscript does not exceed 350 words. Please also ensure that the abstract headings 'Background, Methods, Results, Conclusions' are in bold format, not italics.

Response:
Abstract amended to 350 words and italics changed to bold.

2. In sentence one of your abstract results please change 'European female's' to 'women of European descent' to match your main results section.

Response: change made as requested.

3. Last sentence of background. Please clarify your use of the term inflammatory arthritis relative to osteoarthritis and please ensure this is consistent throughout the manuscript too.

Response:
I am unclear as to why there is a need for clarification with respect to osteoarthritis (OA) as an inflammatory arthritic condition? Whilst OA is not a systemic condition it is still considered to be a form of inflammatory arthritis and, in severe cases, it is managed by rheumatologist in New Zealand. As such, we have included OA in the second sentence of the background in which examples of inflammatory arthritic conditions are listed, as below:

“Foot problems are commonly associated with adult arthritic conditions, particularly with rheumatoid arthritis (RA) [2, 3] and other inflammatory arthritic conditions such as gout [4], systemic sclerosis [5], psoriatic arthropathy [6], systemic lupus erythematos [7] and osteoarthritis (OA) [8].”
Please advise whether you require a further statement in the manuscript regarding the inclusion of OA in the survey.

4. At the beginning of your data analysis section, please include your response to reviewer 1 relative to their query about SPSS.

Response:
The data analysis section has been amended as below:

“Data were analysed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) V22.0 (IBM Corp., New York, USA). The primary analysis was descriptive statistics summarising survey results. Data from Survey Monkey® were manually entered into SPSS by one researcher (GB).”

We have not included comment on possible analysis of correlations and associations as this is irrelevant to the findings being reported.

5. Under the demographics and clinical characteristics section please change the use of the adjective 'female' to 'women of European descent.'

Response: “female” changed to “women”

6. For the following sentence, please check the use of the abbreviation OA. Where is this explained earlier in the manuscript?

Response: The abbreviation (OA) has now been included after the first use of the term in the background section line 4.

Yours sincerely
Angela Brenton-Rule