Author's response to reviews

Title: Prevention of morbidity in sickle cell disease - qualitative outcomes, pain and quality of life in a randomized crossover pilot trial of overnight supplementary oxygen and auto-adjusting continuous positive airways pressure (POMS 2a): study protocol for a randomized controlled trial

Authors:

Jo Howard (Jo.Howard@gstt.nhs.uk)
Baba Inusa (Baba.Inusa@gstt.nhs.uk)
Christina Liossi (C.Liossi@soton.ac.uk)
Eufemia Jacob (eufemia@sonnet.ucla.edu)
Patrick B Murphy (Patrick.b.murphy@kcl.ac.uk)
Nicholas Hart (Nicholas.Hart@gstt.nhs.uk)
Johanna C Gavlak (Johanna.Gavlak@uhs.nhs.uk)
Maria Chorozoglou (M.Chorozoglou@soton.ac.uk)
Sati Sahota (s.sahota@ucl.ac.uk)
Carol Nwosu (Carol.Nwosu@scyss.org)
Maureen Gwam (maureengwam@hotmail.co.uk)
Atul Gupta (atulgupta@nhs.net)
David C Rees (David.Rees@kcl.ac.uk)
Swee Lay Thein (sl.thein@kcl.ac.uk)
Isabel C Reading (I.C.Reading@soton.ac.uk)
Fenella J Kirkham (Fenella.Kirkham@ucl.ac.uk)
Man Ying E Cheng (M.Y.Cheng@soton.ac.uk)

Version: 5
Date: 10 July 2015

Author's response to reviews:

The authors have made no changes in the original manuscript regarding trial design. I stand by my comments. Although a feasibility and acceptability study I think the alteration of the study (minor in my estimation) would strengthen the study. With such large age range of adults and children I am concerned the answers the investigators are looking for will remain elusive. In addition I disagree that repeating a QOL assessment is burdensome.

We apologise that we were not able to alter the age range or the suggestion for excluding those without pain in this feasibility study for which we already had ethical approval. We have now added sentences to the Methods explaining the rationale for the decisions and assure the reviewer that we have taken on board his suggestions for the next stage of the trial.
We apologise that in the first resubmission, we had omitted to highlight the fact that the PEDS-QL is administered after each intervention and after the washout