Author’s response to reviews

Title: Recipients' and providers' perspectives of obesity and potential barriers to weight management programmes in patients with Rheumatoid Arthritis (RA): a qualitative study

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Author’s response to reviews:

July 18th 2017

Dear Dr Jayawardena,

Re: Recipients' and providers' perspectives of obesity and potential barriers to weight management programmes in patients with Rheumatoid Arthritis (RA): a qualitative study (OBSY-D-17-00015R1).

Many thanks for the positive feedback and for the time given to reviewing this paper.

In response to editorial comments, please see below:

1. It is important to include details of the multi-disciplinary team as a result table. e.g. professional qualification/ years of work experience in RA clinic, age, gender etc.

Response: Added as Table 2. (Section: Results, Line: 157, Page 8)
2. Re: table 4 - add "...."

Response: Completed, thank you. (Section: Results, Line: 188, Page 11)

3. It would have been more appropriate to include a RD or weight management specialists for the team.

Response: Unfortunately there were no weight management specialists within the multi-disciplinary team and so their perspectives could not be captured (Section: Results, Line: 153-155, Page 7).

According to Dr J Galloway (co-author, Consultant Rheumatologist), weight management specialists are no longer funded in the NHS for Rheumatology departments.

And to reviewers’ comments:

1. It would be better to be mentioned of duration of obesity and number of prior attempts of being a part of a losing weight programs, if available.

Response: Unfortunately we do not have this specific information and it is not possible to find out retrospectively as the study has now closed. However we have added the only contextual information we hold from 2 patient surveys carried out in the out patients clinic.

(Section: Background, Line: 68-69, Page 4)
2. The age distribution of the volunteers involved in the study is unfortunately spread over two sides of the curve (2-44 years)

Response: The reviewer appears to have misinterpreted the table in this instance. The distribution of 2-44 years represents the duration of time in which patients have been diagnosed with RA and the not the patient’s ages. See Table 1. (Section: Results, Line: 156, Page 8)

3. Although it was mentioned that the definition of obesity in RA patients is BMI> 28 due to sarcopenia, it would be more appropriate to select participants with BMI> 30.

Response: Again there seems to be a slight misunderstanding. Our research included the views of those in the overweight (BMI >25kg/m2) and obese (BMI >30kg/m2), as earlier research (Section: Background, Line: 61-63, Page 3) had shown that those with the greatest annual weight gain were in the overweight category. For this reason it was important to gather the perspectives of both cohorts on obesity and potential barriers to weight management programmes.

We thank the editor and reviewer for their helpful comments and have made revisions as recommended. Please do not hesitate to get in touch if any queries arise. We look forward to hearing from you again soon.

Yours sincerely,

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