Author’s response to reviews

Title: Patient Perspectives on the Pathway to Psoriatic Arthritis Diagnosis: Results From a Web-Based Survey of Patients in the United States

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Title: Patient Perspectives on the Pathway to Psoriatic Arthritis Diagnosis: Results From a Web-Based Survey of Patients in the United States

Dear Dr. Studenic,

I would like to thank the editorial office and reviewers for taking the time to provide thorough feedback on our submission. We have revised our manuscript in response to the reviewers’ comments below and are also submitting the updated manuscript for your consideration. Please note, any page or line numbers listed below correspond to the locations of each revision in the tracked changes version of the manuscript, which we have also attached for the editors.
We feel that the reviewers’ suggestions have been sufficiently addressed and hope that you will now consider this revised submission as suitable for publication in BMC Rheumatology.

Thank you again, and we look forward to hearing from you.

Kind regards,
Alexis Ogdie, MD, MSCE

Comments for the Author

Reviewer 1:

1. Thank you for the revised version. The authors addressed all my comments. In terms of transparency and quality I would suggest to include all the appendices also in the paper (downloadable as appendix) otherwise I think the quality of the paper would be appraised as low.

Response: We thank the reviewer for this suggestion. We will include all appendices as downloadable supplemental information as noted in Lines 88-89, 91, and 92.

Reviewer 2:

1. Regarding your responses to comments f. and g. of reviewer 1, I am not sure that your responses are satisfactory. Your response to f. was "We have added the following language to our manuscript (Lines 167-168): "Due to the large sample size and due to the central limit theorem, the sample means were assumed to be normally distributed.". However, I think this apply to statistical tests, not to present descriptive data. For instance, it is strange to read "the mean (SD) years since first symptom experienced were 13.4 (13.2)" (line 194).

Regarding multiple testing, I am also not sure that your justification is correct: "No Bonferroni or other correction for multiple testing was performed due to the preliminary/exploratory nature of these analyses, which may form the basis of hypotheses in future studies."

Can you please provide further support to these statements?

Response: We thank the reviewer for raising this point. We have deleted the statement stating our assumption that the sample means were normally distributed (Lines 166-169). For completeness, we reported the mean (SD), median (IQR), and range (Tables 1 and 2). We have also clarified that each statistical test between the 3 groups is a unique hypothesis (Lines 165-166).
2. You now considered this a mixed-methods study, as suggested. I think this could also be added in the abstract.

Response: We have added that our study is a mixed-method, 2-phase study in the Abstract (Line 31).

3. Regarding the information you added in the methods (page 6-7), I would consider to move most of it, or at least part of it to appendix.

Response: We thank the reviewer for suggesting this and will make all appendices downloadable as supplementary information as noted in Lines 88-89, 91, and 92.

4. The p-values added in the text between lines 209 and 216 are not clear about what groups are being compared. Can you please clarify this in the text to fit better with the info of Figure 3.

Response: We have clarified the comparison groups of < 6 months, 6 months-4 years, and ≥ 5 years in Lines 205-206.

Editor’s Comments:

1. We would like to include the supplement on literature review, as also pointed out by Rev 1 in the publication.

Response: We thank the Editor for suggesting this and will make all appendices, including the details on the literature review, downloadable as supplementary information as noted in Lines 88-89, 91, and 92.

2. Please include the response to Rev 1 Methods b) and c) as a summary in the methods section. If you hesitate to have supplement “.ClinExpertInterviews…” published, this is fine. However, I think that the supplementary material on concept elicitation is important to be included in the publication.

Response: We thank the Editor for their suggestion. As noted above, we will make all appendices downloadable as supplementary information as noted in Lines 88-89, 91, and 92.

3. You have in greater detail lined out the work flow of the survey, obtaining IC and incentives. I do agree with Rev 2 (comment 3), that this might be phrased more concise, but you may provide this full description in the supplement, in order to adhere to Cherries.

Response: We agree that it would be more informative to provide this full description in the supplement, and make this, along with all appendices, downloadable as supplementary information (noted in Lines 88-89, 91, and 92).
4. Please have a reference in the manuscript that you report according to Cherries.

Response: We have included this reference in Line 86.

5. Please include comments 2 and 4 of reviewer 2.

Response: Both comments have been incorporated into our manuscript. We have added that our study is a mixed-method, 2-phase study in the Abstract (Line 31), and clarified the comparison groups of < 6 months, 6 months-4 years, and ≥ 5 years in Lines 205-206.