

Author's response to reviews

Title: Recent developments in podiatric 'prescribing' in the UK and Australia

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Author's response to reviews: see over

Authors' response to reviewer comments

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Version: 2 **Date:** 30th October 2009

Authors' response to reviews

The authors would like to extend their thanks to the reviewers for their comments and suggested improvements to the commentary, all of which we are happy to agree and incorporate. Please find a point by point response to this reviewer's concerns below.

Reviewer 1 report:

Reviewer comment: 'Background' section, second last sentence of the first paragraph (i.e. bottom of first page of text): change '...in this edition of the journal...' to '...recently published in Journal of Foot and Ankle Research...' - refer to sentence, "Understanding the contemporary context of these changes is dependent upon an appreciation of the complex socio-historical developments which preceded them, and the paper by Borthwick, Short, Nancarrow and Boyce, published in this edition of the journal, may be used as a yardstick for judging the progress made over many years."

Authors' response: *The sentence has been amended to incorporate the exact wording suggested. It now reads "Understanding the contemporary context of these changes is dependent upon an appreciation of the complex socio-historical developments which preceded them, and the paper by Borthwick et al, recently published in Journal of Foot and Ankle Research, may be used as a yardstick for judging the progress made over many years."*

Reviewer comment: Last sentence of the 'Background' section: remove the words 'in this saga,' as it sounds a little dramatic and these words are not needed.

Authors' response: *We agree with the reviewers comment and have deleted the phrase 'in this saga' so that the sentence now reads: "In this commentary, however, the authors focus on two of the most recent events, and consider what these may mean for future practice."*

Reviewer comment: Second last sentence of the 'Recent developments in Australia' section: change 'is' to 'are' in the part in brackets, i.e. '(as far as medicines is concerned)'...make this 'as far as medicines are concerned'.

Authors' response: *This error has been corrected, as suggested. It now reads: "Initially within this scheme (as far as medicines are concerned) individual state poisons regulations will still apply, which will delay Australia-wide application of the Victorian reform agenda."*

Reviewer comment: Last sentence of the second paragraph in the 'Recent developments in Australia' section: add a comma after the word 'Importantly' so it reads, 'Importantly, this acknowledgment...'. In this sentence, I suggest also changing the last section where you write '..., this represents a paradigm shift.' to '..., which represents a paradigm shift.'

Authors' response: *This refers to the second paragraph in the discussion section, which has now been amended to include both points. It now reads: "Importantly, this acknowledgment is not confined to particular specialist areas of practice (such as surgery) - which represents a paradigm shift."*

Reviewer comment: Reword the second sentence of the third paragraph of the 'Discussion' section to make it easier to understand: 'What might be involved in translating "a strong case for independent prescribing" into a broader based use of restricted medicines by UK podiatrists, as in Victoria?...this is a difficult sentence to understand.'

Authors' response: *We agree this is a difficult sentence and have re-worded it accordingly. It now reads: "It is intriguing to consider how "a strong case for independent prescribing" might be translated into practice and if it will resemble the developments in Victoria."*

Reviewer comment: Beginning of the fourth paragraph of the 'Discussion' section: add a comma after the words 'In Australia' so the sentence reads, 'In Australia, ongoing interest...'

Authors' response: *The comma has been added. The sentence now reads: "In Australia, ongoing interest will relate to how the Victorian model will affect the national scene, but with the emergence of a national registration board it is possible that this approach will be endorsed by a national podiatry board, and that local state jurisdictions will seek to amend their poisons regulations accordingly."*

Reviewer comment: Add a space in front of the reference [20].

Authors' response: *a space has now been added, as suggested.*

Reviewer comment Discretionary revisions

The first paragraph in the 'Background' section could do with breaking up into multiple, smaller paragraphs as it is a very long paragraph the way it stands. The first paragraph of the section, 'Recent developments in the UK' could also do with a break as well.

Authors' response: *New breaks have been introduced to both sections. The background section is now in 2 paragraphs ; the Recent Developments in the UK' section is now in 3 paragraphs.*

Reviewer 2 report:

Reviewer comment: This is a very succinct and well-written commentary that complements the Borthwick paper well. I have listed some minor editing suggestions below, all of which can be considered discretionary. Please note that to make it easier for the BMC production editors to format the paper, please insert a space between each paragraph.

Authors' response: *A space between each paragraph has been added, as requested.*

Reviewer comment: The paper also requires “Authors’ contributions” and “Competing interests” sections to be added.

Authors’ response: *“authors’ contributions” and “competing interest” sections have been added. These now read as:*

Competing interests

One author (AMB) is currently Deputy Editor (UK) of the Journal of Foot and Ankle Research, and first author of a paper referred to directly in this commentary.

Authors’ contributions

Both authors were equally involved in the design and writing of the paper. AMB initially drafted the overall context and the UK element of the manuscript, and MFG drafted the Australian context, with additions to the context. Critical revision was undertaken by both authors. Both authors contributed to the interpretation offered.

Reviewer comment: TITLE - suggest removing the quotes around ‘prescribing’.

Authors’ response: The quotes have been removed - the title now reads: *Recent developments in podiatric prescribing in the UK and Australia*

Reviewer comment: INTRODUCTION - re-title this “Abstract”, as BMC requires commentary papers to have an abstract.

Authors’ response: *The introduction has been re-titled “Abstract”, as requested.*

Reviewer comment: BACKGROUND

- lines 8-9: suggest removing italics from direct quote.
- lines 11-13: suggest deleting this sentence, as it is unlikely that the reader of a brief commentary such as this will seek out the source material. As this information is covered in more detail in the Borthwick et al paper, it doesn’t really need to be included here.
- line 13: suggest adding paragraph break before “Clearly, non-medical prescribing...”
- line 21: change to Borthwick et al, and add citation once this paper has been provisionally published.

Authors’ response: *All requested changes have been made: italics have been removed from direct quotes throughout the paper; the sentence in line 11-13 has been removed; a paragraph break has been inserted before the sentence beginning “Clearly, non-medical prescribing (formerly line 13); “Borthwick et al” inserted instead of “Borthwick, Short, Nancarrow and Boyce” (formerly line 21).*

NB: we are happy to add a citation once the paper is provisionally published, as requested.

Reviewer comment: RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN THE UK

- line 6: suggest removing italics from direct quote.
- line 9: suggest adding “it”, ie: “...may even be fair to suggest that it is an indication...”.
- line 13: suggest inserting paragraph break before “The challenge for the profession of podiatry...”.
- last line: add “be”, ie: “...if the Australian experience is to be considered a guide”.

Authors’ response: *We have incorporated all the suggested changes: italics removed from all direct quotes; adding ‘it’ as suggested in line 9 so that the sentences now reads: “It may even be fair to suggest that it is an indication of the extent to which the Department of Health now considers the prescribing of medicines by allied health professionals to be a safe and effective use of resources in answer to the growing needs of patients and their health service providers, both in terms of responsiveness and adaptability.”; a paragraph break has been inserted before the sentence beginning “The challenge for the profession of podiatry...”;* “be” has been added to the last sentence in this section as indicated, so

that it now reads: "Policy development leading to further regulatory change and eventual implementation is, however, likely to be a slow process, if the Australian experience is to be considered a guide."

Reviewer comment: RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN AUSTRALIA

- line 13: delete "n" from "Australian".
- line 18: suggest "backdrop" rather than "back drop".
- line 28: add full stop after reference # 20.
- line 30: suggest "Australia-wide".
- line 32: do you mean "adopted"?

Authors' response: *all these requested changes have been incorporated into the commentary paper. Line 13 now reads: "The position of podiatric surgery in Australia reflects the impact that inequity with funding can have.", as the 'n' has been removed from 'Australian' in this sentence; "back drop" has been changed to "backdrop"; "Australia wide" has been changed to "Australia-wide" as suggested; the authors' agree that the use of the word "adapted" was an error - "adapted" has been changed to "adopted".*

Reviewer comment: DISCUSSION

- line 12: insert comma after "Importantly".
- line 14: insert dash or semi-colon before "this represents a paradigm shift".
- lines 18-19: suggest attaching section that begins with "In Australia..." with preceding paragraph, and adding comma after "Australia".
- line 26: insert space before reference bracket.
- line 26: suggest making this reference a weblink in the reference list, so readers can link directly to it. The format is as for references 19 and 20.

Authors' response: *All the required changes have been made, as suggested. Comma added where suggested (after "Importantly"); a dash inserted as suggested: "Importantly, this acknowledgment is not confined to particular specialist areas of practice (such as surgery) - which represents a paradigm shift."; a space has been inserted before all reference brackets throughout the paper; A weblink reference has been inserted for reference 14 (formerly reference 21) (for the Podiatrists Board of Registration of Victoria S4 Endorsement), so that readers may access this site directly, as requested.*

Reviewer comment: REFERENCES

- please ensure that PubMed abbreviations are used for journal titles (see: <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/journals>)

Authors' responses: *We acknowledge this error and have corrected this and adopted the abbreviations used for PubMed journal titles, as requested.*