

January 2, 2015

Re: **ESPS No: 14764. Revision**

Dear Editor,

Please find enclosed the edited manuscript in Word format (file name: 14764-review.doc).

Title: Meta-analysis of single strain probiotics for the eradication of *Helicobacter pylori* and prevention of adverse events.

Authors: McFarland LV , Malfertheiner P, Huang Y, Wang L

Name of Journal: *World Journal of Meta-analysis*

ESPS Manuscript NO: 14764-Review

The manuscript has been improved according to the suggestions of reviewers. All changes to the manuscript are indicated by yellow highlighting, as requested.

1. Formatting has been updated and references re-done. PMID and DOI numbers added when found. Please see file for the 6 references that do not have these numbers. First page of papers are in pdf file.
2. Postcodes added to title page, as suggested.
3. Core Tip added after Abstract text, as suggested.
4. Statistical reviewer text added to Materials and Methods, as suggested. Signed Statistical Reviewer pdf attached.
5. Appendix 1 and Appendix 2 were converted into Tables 1 and 2, as suggested.
6. Comments section added, as suggested.
7. Revisions have been made according to the suggestions of the reviewers:

(Reviewer #1) The authors have performed a systematic review of adjuvant probiotic treatment in H pylori eradication. Effects on eradication efficiency as well as adverse events were detected.

No revisions suggested by reviewer #1. Thank you.

(Reviewer #2): 1. The authors said that they searched published data ranging from 1960 to 2014. The included data for analysis, however, only covered from 2000 to 2014. I wonder how many original studies were actually conducted prior to 2000. It would be nice to provide a short summary on this issue.

We added the results of the literature for the earlier (pre-2000) search to the results section, as suggested. No phase 3 efficacy trials were found before the year 2000.

2. Some abbreviations, such as AAD (page 10), need to be abbreviated during first use.

We defined abbreviations when used the first time in the main text, as suggested.

(Reviewer #3): The study was interesting and carefully done. 1. One suggestion is not including meeting abstracts in the analysis because the data reported in abstracts only were generally not peer reviewed.

There were only two meeting abstracts that were not subsequently published as full articles included in our analysis. We included them (and kept them in), as meta-analysis guidelines suggest including meeting abstracts in to prevent publication bias. We did assess their effect by running the models weighted on study quality (meeting abstract generally have lower study quality scores due to missing data in the abstract), but there was not a major effect by study quality, so we left them in.

2. Another suggestion is perhaps polishing the English a bit more.

We re-read the text and refreshed the English text where appropriate.

Thank you for all your helpful comments and suggestions!

Lynne V. McFarland