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Authors' response

We thank Deepa Bhartiya for her comments on our article published recently¹.

We have the following comments:

1. This study was firstly not undertaken based on the results of the pilot ABCD study reported from AIIMS, New Delhi, as suggested by Deepa Bhartiya. Our study was based on an extensive Cochrane review² of all relevant published literature on this subject at that point of time.

2. This phase III prospective, open labelled, randomized multicentric trial was conducted from 2007 to 2010 and only relevant issues were highlighted in the discussion pertaining to the trial period. Hence, the contention that no articles published from 2013-2015 having been cited should not be surprising. At no stage, even remotely, have we suggested that no progress has been made in this field as mentioned in the letter³. On the contrary, we agree that significant progress has been made in the field of stem cells and mesenchymal stem cells (MSC) worldwide.

3. Regarding the point raised about MSCs ability to differentiate into cardiac cells we would like to highlight that MSCs have already been differentiated *in vitro* using different growth factors and chemicals into cardiomyocytes and neurons^{4,5}.

4. The author's remaining comments mostly are not relevant to our article as she has discussed extensively on VSELs. However, as is known it has its own controversies in the scientific literature.

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