CORRESPONDENCE

Letter in response to Tashkin et al: limited generalisability of uplift findings to clinical practice

We appreciate the comments made by Tashkin et al regarding the limited generalisability of the Understanding Potential Long-term Impacts on Function with Tiotropium (UPLIFT) findings. In response, the sample we studied was not designed to be representative of the general chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) population, but rather the subgroup of patients with severe COPD who are likely to be at greatest risk of serious cardiovascular events. Second, the derived data presented from the Canadian database analysis do not correspond to the UPLIFT inclusion criteria. The UPLIFT study excluded patients with cardiac arrhythmias deemed unstable or life-threatening, or that required either intervention or a change in medication data sheet unsatisfactory. We propose that the tiotropium data sheet is amended to state that the favourable efficacy/safety profile of tiotropium HandiHaler established in the UPLIFT study applies only to patients without recent cardiovascular or renal comorbidity, as these patients were excluded from the study.

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Contributors SW and JF undertook the data collection that was analysed by MW. All authors contributed to both the drafting of the manuscript and this letter.

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