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Correspondence and Communications

Response to letter commenting on upgrading the BREAST-Q questionnaire

Dear Sir,

We read with interest the reply from Klassen and colleagues¹ to our publication² and we fully agree about the lack of methodological validity related to our suggestion of a BREAST-Q expansion. In fact, our aim was meant to focus the attention on the need for an update of the already existing autologous BREAST-Q, according to the evolution in breast reconstruction and flap choice. This was the reason why we wanted to highlight and in parallel put the accent on this topic.

However, since no evidence is available to date on the inner thigh evaluation, based on the available BREAST-Q structure, we developed the additional session in order to investigate on a different flap donor site compared to the lower abdomen. It seemed to be helpful to share the scientific community the need of such update in the Breast Reconstruction field.

We clearly stated in the original publication that our suggested addition to the BREAST-Q would have needed to undergo psychometric evaluation to gain an effective scientific validation (the validation process of a new scale is well known) which was not meant to be bypassed, as implied by the authors. Our aim was not to develop the “Stocco et al. PAP scale for breast reconstruction” unhappily called by authors in their reply, but to highlight a missing area and suggest a method to get information to improve breast reconstruction services, whilst recognizing its limitations.

We thank and congratulate the authors in respect of their great work with the BREAST-Q and we wait for the validation of the additional sessions anticipated in their letter we hope that our input will inspire or simply support their research.

In the meantime, within its limitations, we will continue to try to gather information with an updated questionnaire aiming to evaluate and compare results in the future. We will keep encouraging constructive debate and collaboration amongst scientists as to development of excellence in Medicine.

Sincerely,

References

1. Klassen AF, Kaur MN, Pusic AL. Adding scales to BREAST-Q must follow the same rigor as original scales. *J Plast Reconstr Aesthet Surg* 2018.
2. Stocco C, Figus A, Razzano S. Upgrading the BREAST-Q questionnaire with donor site evaluation after PAP flap breast reconstruction. *J Plast Reconstr Aesthet Surg* 2018 Feb 13. Pii: S1748-6815(18)30038-X [Epub ahead of print].

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