Answer to the Letter of the Editor T. Cook concerning “A prospective randomized controlled study on the treatment outcome of SpineCor brace versus rigid brace for adolescent idiopathic scoliosis with follow-up according to the SRS standardized criteria” by Jing Guo et al., Eur Spine J, doi:10.1007/s00586-013-3146-1

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Dear Editor,

We appreciate very much the interest in our manuscript and are grateful for the comments. Our responses are as follows:

Three members of our research team (prosthetist–orthotist by training with extensive experiences in scoliosis bracing) did participate in a full training program of SpineCor in St. Justine Hospital, Montreal in the year of 2000. Each of these three members was issued with a full training certificate. In the captioned study, we followed closely with the treatment protocol suggested during the training program. The figure provided in the manuscript was for showing the outlook of the SpineCor orthosis, whereas in the actual application, thigh bands and other accessories and components were applied according to the treatment protocol. All patients were followed in a special clinic by the same team of orthopaedic surgeon and orthotist closely throughout the study. The internal validity of our study was therefore not compromised by the factors mentioned in the comments.

Evidence-based medicine depends on well-conducted clinical studies designed with standardized outcome criteria.

As mentioned in our manuscript [1], several studies have reported conflicting results regarding effectiveness of SpineCor. To the best of our knowledge, out of the published papers in English, only four were of prospective randomized or controlled trial design and only two used the SRS standardized criteria in evaluating brace outcomes. Our study followed a randomized study design using the SRS standardized criteria. We certainly would welcome more studies with high level of evidence to be reported for further definition of the effectiveness of SpineCor, especially by centers other than the originator unit.

Conflict of interest None.

Reference

1. Guo J, Lam TP, Wong MS, Ng BK, Lee KM, Liu KL, Hung LH, Lau AH, Sin SW, Kwok WK, Yu FW, Qiu Y, Cheng JC (2013) A prospective randomized controlled study on the treatment outcome of SpineCor brace versus rigid brace for adolescent idiopathic scoliosis with follow-up according to the SRS standardized criteria. Eur Spine J (E-publication)

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