

**AUTHORS' REPLY**

Dear Sir,

We would like to thank Prof Webster and Dr Osborne for their comments on our article, "Peripheral intravenous catheter-related phlebitis and related risk factors".<sup>(1)</sup>

Because phlebitis is a multifactorial complication, the incidence of thrombophlebitis as a peripheral intravenous catheter (PIC)-related complication has been reported to range from 5.3%<sup>(2)</sup> to 77.5%.<sup>(3)</sup> Some other studies also reported a higher incidence than that referred to in our article: 36.8%,<sup>(4)</sup> 25%–35%,<sup>(5)</sup> 39%,<sup>(6)</sup> 26.1%.<sup>(7)</sup>

The basis for our study was that we experienced a high incidence of phlebitis in 2005. After the study, two factors were identified, viz. inexperienced staff and type of catheter used. We have since reduced the risk by changing the manufacturer of our catheters and providing staff training. Another study is being planned to evaluate the effectiveness of these measures taken.

Indwelling time is an important risk factor for a PIC-related complication,<sup>(3,8,9)</sup> and we acknowledge that there is still a controversy regarding this.

Yours sincerely,

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