REPLY TO LETTER TO THE EDITOR

The fact that Dr Mansencal and colleagues have found similar findings in their study population supports that secondary harmonic imaging should not be used to assess LV mass using current normal ranges and partition values for LVH which are based on measurements obtained by fundamental imaging. I agree wholeheartedly that LV mass estimation by secondary harmonic imaging has not been validated, nor has a normal range or partition value been established using this modality. Indeed, we raise this point in our paper on several occasions.

With regard to reproducibility, although we did not provide a variability range, we stated the presence of excellent correlation between double reading for both fundamental and secondary harmonic imaging (r = 0.98 and 0.91, respectively) and provided mean absolute differences between readings in LVM for both modalities. However, intra-observer variation was <10% for both modalities. Given that a single observer was used in our study, I cannot comment on whether modality affected inter-observer agreement, but there was no apparent effect on intra-observer agreement.

Yours sincerely
Andrew McGavigan*
Stobhill Hospital
Department of Cardiology
Balornock Road
Glasgow G21 3UW, United Kingdom