Patient recruitment

PSS patients for this study were recruited via two separate routes: First, patients with a confirmed diagnosis of PSS according to the AECG criteria attending the outpatient clinics run by investigator WFN between 1 March and 1 May 2012 were invited. The sample collection and processing were performed predominantly by a single researcher (KSC). Because the equipment for measuring TEG and MEA is located on a different site from where the outpatient clinic was being held and the requirement to process the samples within 3 hours of collection, therefore not all PSS patients who had attended the clinic during this period had been invited and there was also a possible bias for selecting those with an early morning or early afternoon appointments.

Second, PSS patients who were participants of the UK primary Sjogren’s syndrome registry (UKPSSR) and attending the outpatient clinics of the Freeman Hospital (but were not expected to attend the clinics during the above mentioned period) were sent an invitation letter to participate in this study (n=63). In total after the first round of invitation, 28 responded “Yes”, 5 responded “No” and no response received from the remaining patients. Overall, 18 female PSS patients were recruited from the outpatient clinics, and 16 female patients via invitation. Not all who have accepted the invitations were studied due to limitation of financial and personnel resources.

All SLE patients were recruited from patients attending the outpatient clinics between 1 March and 1 May 2012 as described earlier.