Author's response to reviews

Title: Factors associated with patients self-reported adherence to prescribed physical activity in routine primary health care

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Author's response to reviews:

To the editors, BMC Family Practice. Malmö 30 April 2010

Dear Madame/Sir,

Thank you for giving us the opportunity to respond to the reviewers’ comments one more time and once again revise our manuscript, 'Factors associated with patients self-reported adherence to prescribed physical activity in routine primary health care’

We are grateful to the editor and the reviewers for a number of relevant and helpful questions and comments. We have carefully considered these and revised our manuscript.

We believe the revisions have improved the manuscript and hope the revised version and our replies will meet final approval and that you will find the manuscript suitable for publication in BMC Family Practice.

We would be happy to supply any additional information you require.

Yours Sincerely,

Matti E Leijon

We are grateful about the comments from reviewer 1, believing that our new manuscript is improved, and that we successfully have revised the manuscript according to per previous suggestions and that our article is considered to be important in its field.

We are also pleased to see that reviewer 2 find our new manuscript improved, that we have responded to the reviewers’ comments in a good way, and that the article findings are seen as important to those with related research interests. We are grateful to the relevant and helpful questions and comments below, and we
have addressed each of these comments and described how we have implemented them into the revised manuscript on the following pages.

Major Compulsory Revisions
1. The authors have still not made a strong case for the value of adherence to a specific prescribed form of activity vs achieving an increase in any form of physical activity. At the very least I think a comment needs to be made in the discussion to acknowledge that the group who became physically active in an activity other than that prescribed is missed when assessing ‘adherence’, but that an increase in activity per se is an important outcome. Perhaps adherence to a non-prescribed activity suggests that the PAR was not well tailored to the individual in the first place?
   - We agree with this comment and have now included a section discussing these issues on page 13.

Major Compulsory Revisions
2. The authors have responded to my question about recommendations on the frequency, duration and intensity of activity in a PAR in the cover letter. I think mention should be made in the discussion that frequency, duration and intensity of activity were included on the PAR but not often used, with a suggested explanation as to why this might be.
   - We agree in general to this comment, but believe that we do not have data supporting this kind of statement.

The authors noted that those already doing PA on 5-7 days were also prescribed PAR for reasons such as ‘need of more activity or a more intensive activity or different kind of activity.’ It therefore seems unusual that frequency, intensity and duration were not commonly addressed.
   - Again we agree and have the same gut feeling as the reviewer, but believe that we do not have data to support this kind of comment.

Minor Essential Revisions
3. Re. Reference 8 is in Swedish and not accessible by general audience so should be replaced by another reference or the key content described in the text. I don’t understand the authors response to this point – no other ‘complementary’ reference seems to accompany Ref 8?
   - We are grateful for this comment and apologize for missing that Ref 8 was the
only one in the Method section. We have now removed the statement and the reference in that section. Still, the reference is used in other places, but always supported by other references.

A reference to other relevant work by the authors has been added (ref 9) – thank you.

Major Compulsory Revisions

4. Although referenced in several places in the present paper, the authors have not explicitly stated that data from the same study period - physical activity levels among this same group of individuals - have been reported elsewhere, and that the current data offer another means of assessing the outcomes of PAR administered in primary care. In the interest of transparency I believe the authors need to state (up front – in the introduction) that the present data was collected at the same time as data on physical activity levels among those receiving PAR (ref1).

- This information is now included on page 8 in the method section.

5. Page 14 – ‘There was a strong correlation between adherence and increased physical activity Level’ this needs to be referenced ie Ref [1] It wouldn’t hurt to present the actual % of those meeting PA targets when discussing the correlation between adherence and PA in this paragraph.

- This information (61%) is now included on page 15 in the result section. As we added the references about the previous studies in the method section, we do not believe that it is necessary to include them again.

>> Editing

Minor essential revision

6. Page 8 – remove comma before reference 1

- Thank you! The comma is now removed

Comment from the Editorial team

Move your section on ethics approval to the methods section of your manuscript. Furthermore, please document whether you received an official waiver from an ethics committee and please provide the name of the committee which granted this.

- This information is now included on page 5 in the method section