Author's response to reviews

Title: Understanding childhood asthma in focus groups: perspectives from mothers of different ethnic backgrounds

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The revisions made are largely in response to the reviewers comments. The numbers below correspond to the numbers listed in the reviews.

Report from Dr Neville -
5. I have attempted to reinforce the point that in attempting to understand public / mothers explanatory models, it was important not to bias their own reasoning by announcing the diagnosis given to the boy in the video clip. This has been repeated in the second and third sentences of the first paragraph in the discussion. The suggestion of presenting other case scenarios has been included in the fourth and fifth sentences of the fourth paragraph of the discussion.

6. I have not included this point since 'race', as physiological difference, is not relevant here and 'ethnicity' is the generally accepted term when considering issues of culture - language, perception etc. The first paragraph of the method section deals with the issue of why ethnicity is being considered.

7. This point has been included in the final paragraph of the discussion.

8. This point has been made clearer in the final paragraph of the discussion.

9. This point has been included at the end of the third paragraph in the discussion.

Report from Dr Griffiths -
2. More information about the analytic process has been included in the final paragraph of the method section. Grounded theory has not been specifically mentioned since each focus group session and its analysis was self contained rather than building upon the previous session.

3. It is difficult to relate with any certainty where points may relate to different medical traditions. However I have included the point about the relative lack of discussion about stress at the end of the second paragraph in the discussion (along with the reference suggested).

Summary of changes made:
Most of the suggestions given by the peer reviewers have been included into the final text (as described above in the point by point response). References have been adjusted from number 20 onwards to include the reference suggested by Dr Griffiths (point number three). In addition, 'doctors' have occasionally replaced 'health care workers'. Finally, 'Bengali' in the abstract (method section) has been corrected to 'Bangladeshi'. 