Author's response to reviews

Title: Risk factors for Contracting Watery Diarrhoea in Kadoma City, Zimbabwe, 2011: A Case Control Study

Authors:

Brian A Maponga Dr. (abmaponga@gmail.com)
Daniel Chirundu Mr. (dchirundu@me.com)
Notion T Gombe Mr. (gombent@yahoo.com)
Mufuta Tshimanga Prof. (tshimangamufuta@gmail.com)
Gerald Shambira Dr. (gshambira@yahoo.com)
Lucia Takundwa Dr. (lucitaku@yahoo.co.uk)
Humphrey Ndondo Mr. (humphreyndondo@yahoo.co.uk)

Version: 6  Date: 11 November 2013

Author's response to reviews: see over
[1] Reviewer’s report

Title: Risk factors for Contracting Watery Diarrhoea in Kadoma City, Mashonaland West Province, Zimbabwe, 2011
Version: 5 Date: 6 September 2013

Reviewer: marzia lazzerini

Reviewer’s report:
The paper is of value, but still need some work on editing and style.

TITLE
1. Add in the title that this is case control study

We have added in the title ‘case control study’ and we have removed “Mashonaland West Province”

ABSTRACT
2. Background- last sentence - add that this is case control study

We have added that this is a case control study to the last sentence

3. Results- Add a full point before “Hand washing in a single bowl

We have added a full point before “Hand washing in a single bowl”

4. Results- The municipal water tested resulted not contaminated with E.coli, 23(52%) of shallow wells and 3(20%) boreholes tested were positive for
5. E.coli.- please add denominator

We have added denominators and corrected grammar mistakes

BACKGROUND
6. In 2011, Kadoma City experienced an upsurge of watery diarrhoeal cases during week 36, in 2011. The total cases reported by the city’s five clinics doubled from 27 to 53 cases between week 35 and 36. The cases further doubled from 55 to 107 between week 37 and week 38. The weekly watery diarrhoeal cases at the under 5 clinic crossed the action threshold line during week 36. The diarrhoeal cases at the under 5 clinic increased 7 fold, from 7 to 50 cases, between weeks 35 and 38.- Please do reference figure 1

We have referenced figure 1 as suggested

RESULTS
7. All 33 municipal water samples were satisfactory”: do you mean that they were below the threshold for contamination? I suggest to write this explicitly. Substitute “satisfactory” with some more explicit word.

We have replaced the word satisfactory and now the sentence reads “All 33 municipal water samples tested were below the threshold limit for contamination with E. Coli”
8. DISCUSSION
9. I suggest to modify the sequence of paragraph. Start by discussing the epidemic, than move to the risk factors (i.e. move the first paragraph after what is now the 4th paragraph)

We have modified the sequence of the paragraphs as suggested, and corrected grammatical errors

10. Add a comment on whether type of germs suggest faecal contamination or not. Add reference as needed.
See reference 13

11. “A systematic review of several studies, estimated that appropriate hand washing with soap, could reduce the risks of severe intestinal infections and of shigellosis by up to 48% and 59%, respectively. [10]" Add a full point before this sentence.

We have added a full point before the sentence

12. “Some of the limitation for this study include” delete “Some”

We have deleted the word some, and corrected grammatical errors

CONCLUSIONS
13. Delete all the sentences that repeat results. In conclusion you should give bottom-line message, not repeat results.

Sentences repeating results have been deleted. The paragraph with recommendations has been deleted as it is repeating conclusions and public health actions taken.

PUBLIC HEALTH ACTIONS TAKEN
13. “Health education on importance of practicing good personal hygiene, boiling and treating water with water purification tablets before drinking and long term benefits of exclusive breast feeding should continue. All municipal clinics now have weekly updated diarrhoea thresholds” : Why “weekly updated diarrhoea thresholds” Do you mean weekly updated reports?

We have replaced “weekly updated diarrhea thresholds” with ‘weekly updated reports”

14. “In view of the protective effects of municipal water, the installation of Dedicated electricity power lines was expedited by the Zimbabwe Electricity Supply Authority”: make more explicit why electricity is important ( I guess to pump the water)

We have added the importance of electricity to continuous water pumping

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field
Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being published
Statistical review: Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.
Declaration of competing interests: No
Reviewer's report

Title: Risk factors for Contracting Watery Diarrhoea in Kadoma City, Mashonaland West Province, Zimbabwe, 2011

Version: 5 Date: 4 September 2013

Reviewer: Daniele Lantagne

Reviewer's report: Thank you for the edits. The paper is improved.

Major compulsory revisions:
1) The paper has a number of grammatical and reference errors. For example E. coli is sometimes italicized, sometimes not, sometimes referred to as E. coli, sometimes as E-coli. Additionally, the spacing is inconsistent. Additionally, the referencing is inconsistent - Daniele S is a first name not a last name. Additionally, the Centres for Disease Control is not the name - it is the "Centers for Disease Control and Prevention". Additionally, there are grammatically issues. The paper needs a full edit - right now it is sloppy, and without a clean edited copy is unpublishable.

We have gone through the whole document and made grammar corrections
We have corrected referencing to be consistent with journal requirements

2) Why were the microbiological samples only incubated 6 hours, when it is required that samples be incubated for 180-24 hours? If samples were not incubated for the required time, all data should be dropped from the paper.

The samples were incubated for the required time of 24 hours. The six hours we quoted only as the required minimum.

3) The language around the threshold values remains confusing. Please rewrite the abstract with the threshold defined and define the threshold in text, not only in a figure.

We have added an explanation on the threshold calculation and referencing

Thank you.

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

Quality of written English: Not suitable for publication unless extensively edited

Statistical review:
No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

Declaration of competing interests: I declare that I have no competing interests