Author's response to reviews

Title: Measuring the Costs of Outreach Motivational Interviewing for Smoking-Cessation and Relapse-Prevention Among Low-Income Pregnant Women

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Author's response to reviews:

Dear Editor,
Milt Weinstein, Karen Emmons, Margaret Kearney and I have completed the attached manuscript, "Measuring the Costs of Outreach Motivational Interviewing for Smoking-Cessation and Relapse-Prevention Among Low-Income Pregnant Women" and write to submit the manuscript to BMC Pregnancy and Childbirth for publication. To our knowledge, few, if any studies, have systematically applied micro-costing techniques recommended by the US Panel for Cost-Effectiveness in Health and Medicine for Motivational Interviewing, especially among vulnerable and hard to reach populations.

A brief description of the paper is below and it is attached.
Smoking imposes a significant economic burden on society, but smoking cessation can improve both the quantity and quality of life at low costs. When evaluating smoking cessation interventions, accurate data on costs are essential for understanding resource consumption. However, smoking cessation interventions, such as motivational interviewing (MI), for which prior data on resource costs are not available, and for which cost-based reimbursement rates have not been developed, present special challenges.
Although MI is increasingly being adapted and used in addiction research, few, if any, studies have measured the costs of delivering this technique and none, to our knowledge, have focused specifically on low-income pregnant women. We therefore developed a methodology for collecting costs of delivering MI on an outreach basis and report cost data collected by this method from a US National Cancer Institute funded randomized clinical trial.

In the randomized controlled trial, we compared MI on an outreach basis (N=156) with Usual Care (UC) (N= 146) among low-income pregnant women in Boston. The total cost of $309.2 per client for the MI intervention compared with a cost of $4.85 per client for usual care, a difference of $304.4 ([CI], $289.2 to $320.2). The total cost of the MI intervention for 156 clients was $48,235.

The paper systematically applies techniques recommended by the Panel for Cost-Effectiveness in Health and Medicine. The senior author on the paper, Milton C. Weinstein, Henry J. Kaiser Professor of Health Policy and Management at Harvard University, was co-chair of the Panel that developed these recommendations and an investigator on Dr. Ruger's NIH Career Development Award.

Thank you for your time and consideration. We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Jennifer