Author's response to reviews

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

Authors:

Jennifer Prah Ruger (jennifer.ruger@yale.edu)
Karen M. Emmons (karen_m_emmons@dcfi.harvard.edu)
Margaret H. Kearney (margaret_kearney@urmc.rochester.edu)
Milton C. Weinstein (mcw@hsph.harvard.edu)

Version: 3 Date: 13 March 2009

Author's response to reviews: see over
To the Editors

Please find below responses to the queries presented by the senior assistant editor, Natalie Pafitis (extracted from parts of our e-mail correspondence).

Query 1: We note that you have used data from a randomized controlled trial (1997-2000) for your cost analysis but that this has not been cited within your manuscript. Please provide a citation for this in your article.

Response 1: In terms of (1), we note in the funding/support section of the paper that the RCT was funded by a grant from the NCI and that work on this paper was supported by a K award from NIDA. We note, “Funding/Support: This work was supported by a grant from the National Cancer Institute (grant 5R01CA073242-04). Dr. Ruger is supported by a Career Development Award from the National Institute on Drug Abuse (grant 1K01DA01635810).”

Query 2: We also note that a related publication of yours (‘Cost-effectiveness of motivational interviewing for smoking cessation and relapse prevention among low-income pregnant women: a randomized controlled trial’ Value Health. 2008 Mar-Apr;11(2):191-8. Epub 2007 Sep 13.) has not been cited within your manuscript. Please comment on this and provide an explanation as to how your current submission to BMC Pregnancy and Childbirth presents an advance over this publication.

Response 2: In terms of (2), we have now referenced this Value Health article in our paper (attached). The Value Health article reports the results of the trial in terms of effectiveness and cost-effectiveness. The manuscript we submitted to BMC is entirely different, in it we report the results of the micro-costing study conducted alongside the RCT as one of the few of its kind to employ such micro-costing methodology in accordance with recommendations of the Panel on Cost-Effectiveness in Medicine, the co-chair of which is our co-author, Milton Weinstein. Estimating the real resource costs associated with outreach programs is essential for understanding the economics of reaching hard-to-reach underserved populations. The NIH is increasingly interested in micro-costing studies and research alongside RCT and I have just received funding to conduct another such study in the next several years.

I hope that this addresses the queries satisfactorily. I have uploaded the revised manuscript. Please do not hesitate to contact me should you require further information.
All best,

Jennifer

Jennifer Prah Ruger, Ph.D.
Yale University School of Medicine
Department of Epidemiology and Public Health
60 College Street, P. O. Box 208034
New Haven
CT 06520
jennifer.ruger@yale.edu

Tel: 203 785 3710
Fax: 203 785 6193