Author's response to reviews

Title: External Influences and Priority-Setting for Anti-Cancer Agents: A Case Study of Media Coverage in Adjuvant Trastuzumab for Breast Cancer

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Author's response to reviews:

May 1, 2007

Dear Dr. Le Good,

Please find attached our manuscript (MS: 9342003471296619) which has been revised based on comments from the two reviewers.

Our revisions and responses to each of the reviewers' comments are outlined below.

We look forward to hearing from you.

With kind regards,

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Responses to Reviewer’s Comments

Susan Dent

1. Agree, change made (page 10, paragraph 1).

2. Agree, change made (page 6, paragraph 2).

3. No change made. The focus of this review is the experience of drug funding and media coverage in Ontario, Canada. Accordingly we have described Ontario's approval process in detail. In the Introduction we briefly describe the role of NICE in the approval of agents in the UK, however we feel it is beyond the scope of this study to describe the UK funding process in further detail.

4. Agree, change made (page 6, paragraph 3).

5. No change made. In both the Introduction and Discussion we describe in detail the fast-tracked approval process that took place for trastuzumab in Ontario. Accordingly we do not feel that further comment on this topic would contribute meaningfully to the article.

Daniela Friedman
1. Agree, change made (page 1, paragraph 3).

2. Agree, change made (page 4, paragraph 2).

3. No change made. This study was primarily descriptive and we wanted to incorporate a minimum of inferential statistics. With respect to Figure 2, within each category there were sample size issues as well as the risk of multiple statistical tests. Accordingly, we chose not to perform inferential statistics and instead present the results graphically.

4. No change made. We have already described the findings of the suggested authors (Hoffman-Goetz, MacDonald) in our discussion in direct reference to this point (page 10, paragraph 3).

5. Agree, change made (page 12, paragraph 2).

6. Agree, change made (page 6, paragraph 3)

7. No change made. Based on the rationale described above in Point #3, we did not perform additional comparative tests.

8. We were unable to find any spelling mistakes on this page.