Author's response to reviews

Title: The Social Pediatrics Initiative: A RICHER model of primary health care for at risk children and their families

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Author's response to reviews: see over
Dear Dr. Crow,

Thank-you for this opportunity to revise our manuscript. Please find our responses to the reviewer’s comments in this letter. We trust you will find these revisions sufficient and look forward to your positive response. Please do not hesitate to contact me should you have further questions.

Sincerely,
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Version: 2 Date: 8 May 2012
Reviewer: Amy Houtrow

- THE EXTENSIVE DISCUSSION ABOUT DISPARITIES IN THE INTRO DOESN'T GET CARRIED THROUGH THE REST OF THE PAPER EXCEPT THAT THE PATIENTS/PARTICIPANTS ARE DISADVANTAGED. PLEASE ADDRESS THIS THROUGHOUT.
Response: Done

Response: We have revised the methods section to make it clearer (paragraphs 1 and 2 in the Procedures sub-section).

- ON PAGE 6 LAST PARAGRAPH THE AUTHORS REFER TO TABLE 1 AS IF IT HAD DIMENSIONS OF PRIMARY CARE IN THE TABLE, IT DOES NOT, IT IS A DEMOGRAPHIC TABLE. PLEASE PROVIDE THE ACTUAL TABLE REFERRED TO.
Response: We have corrected the mistake referring to Table 1. It now points readers to Table 2, which does contain our variables of interest and other dimensions of primary care.
-THE AUTHORS PROVIDE INCONSISTENT AMOUNTS OF DETAIL ABOUT THE SURVEY INSTRUMENT. FOR EXAMPLE, THERE IS A LARGE LIST OF QUESTIONS ON THE TOP OF PAGE 7 RELATING TO COMMUNICATION BUT ONLY AN EXAMPLE OF THE QUESTION ABOUT EMPOWERMENT. PLEASE BE CONSISTENT WITH THE LEVEL OF DETAIL. CONSIDER ORGANIZING IN CHART (THIS MAY HAVE BEEN WHAT THE AUTHORS HAD INTENDED WITH TABLE 1 BUT DIDN'T PROVIDE)
Response: We have now provided all the items of the empowerment scale. We don’t organize all the items and scales in a table since only the variables of interest are discussed in detail. Other information on the various dimensions of primary care that were measured can be found in Table 2 and in previous references.

-PLEASE REPORT ON PARENT HEALTH CHALLENGES SOMEWHERE IF YOU ARE GOING TO ELUDE TO THEM ON PAGE 8 WITH A VAGUE STATEMENT
Response: We have now reported that 13% of parents were not able to work due to long-term sickness or disability (first paragraph of Results section). We have eliminated the sentence that appeared vague.

-THERE IS A QUOTE FROM AN INTERVIEW UNDER THE HEADING OF DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS. THIS QUOTE HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH DESCRIBING THE POPULATION EXCEPT THAT THE PARENT HAS 3 KIDS. PLEASE TAKE OUT OR MOVE THIS QUOTE OR JUSTIFY WHY IT BELONGS IN THIS SECTION
Response: This quote has been moved

-MORE IMPORTANTLY, THERE ARE NO RESULTS OF THE THEMATIC ANALYSIS PRESENTED EXCEPT FOR THE OUT OF PLACE QUOTES. THE REVIEWERS WOULD BE ADVISED TO PRESENT THE RESULTS OF THE THEMATIC ANALYSIS AND THEN USE QUOTES AS EXAMPLES TO EMPHASIZE THE THEME.
Response: The results have been modified to more clearly illuminate the themes. We present the mixed-methods analysis rather than the qualitative and quantitative results separately.

-THE AUTHORS IDENTIFIED SUBSTANTIAL PROBLEM WITH COMMUNICATION (SEE PAGE 9). 42% OF FAMILIES REPORTED LANGUAGE BARRIERS. THE AUTHORS CHOSE TO PRESENT THE POSITIVE FINDING THAT 58% DID NOT HAVE BARRIERS. THIS REVIEWER WOULD ENCOURAGE THE AUTHORS TO BE CIRCUMSPECT ABOUT THIS AND IN GENERAL ABOUT HOW THEIR DESIRE TO PROMOTE THEIR CLINICAL METHOD IMPACTS THEIR FINDINGS.
Response: We have clarified that there were 58% of people who answered this question (first sentence, paragraph 4 of Results section). There is a note in Table 2 that not all the percentages add up to 100% because of missing data. In the case of this question, there was 36% missing data. The additional comments about being more circumspect and taking a more critical eye has been taken into consideration throughout this manuscript. We based our interpretation of the results on both the qualitative and quantitative findings. However, we also added a sentence about missing data in the paragraph discussing limitations of the study (paragraph 6, Discussion section).

-THE PRESENTATION OF THE SCALED AVERAGES IS HARD TO UNDERSTAND IN COMPARISON TO THE PERCENTAGES PRESENTED IN TABLE 2. THIS REVIEWER WOULD ADVISE CHANGING THEM TO PERCENTAGES SO THE READER CAN UNDERSTAND THEM MORE EASILY.
Response: Likert scale scores are typically presented as means and standard deviations. Although the numbers have associated word anchors that is presented in the text (first and second paragraph of
Methods section), we have added more description at the bottom of the Table 2. A reader should now be able to interpret, for example, that a score of 4.7 on the Compassionate, Respectful scale means that participants reported that their communication with providers was “usually to always” compassionate and respectful.

-**IN THE SECOND PARAGRAPH ON PAGE 10, THE AUTHORS PROVIDE SOME ADJUSTED ANALYSIS. THIS DOES NOT BELONG IN THE DESCRIPTIVE SECTION.**

**Response:** We have substantially revised the Results section.

-**THE HEADING FOR TABLE 3 COMES OUT OF THE BLUE ON PAGE 10. AFTER THE HEADING THE AUTHORS PROVIDE NO RESULTS AND NO INTRODUCTION TO TABLE 3.**

**Response:** We agree that the call-outs for the where the tables ought to be inserted was not clear. We have substantially revised the Results section.

-**UNFORTUNATELY, THE ONLY REGRESSION RESULTS ARE PROVIDED BEFORE THE SECTION ON REGRESSION RESULTS. THIS REVIEWER STRONGLY FEELS THAT THIS ENTIRE SECTION NEEDS TO ACTUALLY BE WRITTEN**

**Response:** We have revised the regression paragraph (paragraph 9, Results section). Part of the reason for this comment is because the call-outs for the tables was confusing. Again, the Results section has been substantially revised.

-**THIS REVIEWER IS QUITE CONFUSED AS TO WHY A LONG QUOTE ABOUT RESPECT IS IN THE REGRESSION RESULTS SECTION. PLEASE REMOVE IT. PLEASE ALSO REMOVE THE QUOTE AND SECTION ABOUT THE IMPORTANCE OF UNDERSTANDING THE SOCIAL CONTEXT. THEY SERVE NO PURPOSE IN A REGRESSION SECTION.**

**Response:** Based on the revised Results section, the quotes are now more closely linked with the reporting of the survey results. The importance of understanding the social context was removed.

-**THIS REVIEWER UNDERSTANDS THAT THE AUTHORS ARE TRYING TO PRESENT MIXED METHODS RESULTS. UNFORTUNATELY, JUST THROWING IN SECTIONS FROM THE QUALITATIVE INTERVIEWS THAT ARE TOTALLY UNRELATED TO THE SURVEY RESULTS DOES NOT MAKE SENSE. THIS REVIEWER WOULD RECOMMEND THAT THE AUTHORS GO BACK TO THEIR DATA AND ENTIRELY REWRITE THE RESULTS SECTION. THEY CAN EITHER GIVE RESULTS FOR THE SURVEY AND THEN GIVE RESULTS FROM THE INTERVIEWS OR TRY A MIXED METHODS PRESENTATION OF THE RESULTS. FOR EXAMPLE, ON THE TOP OF PAGE 10, THE AUTHORS REPORT THAT PARENTS RESPONDED HIGH EMPOWERMENT SCORES. AFTER REPORTING THE SURVEY RESULTS (THE NUMBER) THE AUTHORS COULD GIVE AN EXAMPLE OF HOW THIS WAS BROUGHT OUT IN THE THEMATIC ANALYSIS.**

**Response:** The results have been substantially revised to provide a mixed methods presentation of the results.

-**THE AUTHORS CLAIM THAT THEIR RESULTS IDENTIFY THE PROMISE OF RICHER. BUT NO COMPARISON IS MADE TO OTHER TYPES OF CARE SYSTEMS. THE READER HAS NO WAY OF KNOWING, FOR EXAMPLE, IF THE RATES OF DIFFICULTY WITH COMMUNICATION ARE HIGHER OR LOWER IN THE RICHER GROUP COMPARED TO REGULAR CARE.**

**Response:** We have revised the first sentence of the Discussion section accordingly. We have been careful not to suggest we have compared RICHER to other models of primary care delivery.
-ONE MAJOR METHODOLOGIC CONCERN IS THAT THE AUTHORS ARE VERY INVESTED IN THE INITIATIVE, THIS COULD CLOUD THEIR ABILITY TO BE NEUTRAL IN THEIR INTERVIEWING AND INTERPRETATION OF THE RESULTS.
Response: We have revised the discussion. We have no conflict of interest in writing up these results. We are enthusiastic about the positive results of being able to reach some of British Columbia’s most vulnerable. Of course with any qualitative work, the researcher is also considered the instrument. Therefore, a mixed-methods study provides more “unbiased” results since we can see a convergence and corroboration of results. We have revised the Limitations paragraph in the Discussion section.

-PLEASE BE CONSISTENT WHEN TALKING ABOUT DISPARITIES, INEQUITIES AND INEQUALITIES THROUGHOUT THE INTRODUCTION
Response: We have carefully checked this. We do not use the word “disparity” in the introduction or in the manuscript.

-PLEASE SPELL OUT PHC THE FIRST TIME YOU USE IT (IN ABSTRACT)
Response: Done

-PLEASE REVISE THE CONCLUSION OF THE ABSTRACT TO DIRECTLY RELATE TO THE RESULTS YOU PRESENT IN THE ABSTRACT
Response: Done

-THE PURPOSE OF THE PROJECT NOTED PATIENT EMPOWERMENT (SEE #2 ON PAGE 4) BUT THIS REVIEWER BELIEVES THE GOAL IS PARENT EMPOWERMENT. PLEASE CLARIFY THROUGHOUT
Response: We note that, “The provider’s interpersonal style of compassion and respectfulness was key to empowering patients to care for their health and the health of their children.” We have clarified throughout that parents are reporting on their experiences in using RICHER and that they are empowered to care for their own health and the health of their children.

-PLEASE BE CLEAR THROUGHOUT ABOUT THE LANGUAGES SPOKEN 'CHINESE' IS EITHER CANTONESE OR MANDARIN. IT IS REDUNDANT TO SAY CANTONESE OR CHINESE
Response: Done

-IN RESULTS, PLEASE NOTE THAT MOST OF THE RESPONDENTS ARE MOTHERS. THAT WILL ALTER HOW THE READER WILL INTERPRET THE EMPLOYMENT RESULTS
Response: We have added clarification to the first paragraph of the results.

-IT MAY BE HELPFUL TO STATE THAT MANY OF THE ASPECTS OF THE DIMENSIONS OF PRIMARY CARE FIT WITH THE US MODEL OF THE MEDICAL HOME
Response: This comment is helpful in thinking about future work in this area. We will take this into consideration for future work and future publications.

-IN FUTURE WORK, IT WOULD BE HELPFUL TO KNOW HOUSEHOLD CHARACTERISTICS. FOR EXAMPLE, DOES ANYONE IN THE HOME WORK OUTSIDE THE HOME?
Response: In Table 2, we do report that about 23% of respondents work either part- or full-time. These people do work outside the home.
Reviewer: Jean-Francois Trani

Discussion p.10-11: My previous comment has not been addressed.
Response: We believe this is the comment that the reviewer is referring to: “p.10-11: “a review of the psychosocial literature concluded that “successful and sustainable cooperation must be built on a foundation of trust and reciprocity.”[54]. We have now removed this sentence.

Abstract, method: n=7 after data not before.
Response: Revised accordingly.