Author’s response to reviews

Title: The influence of parental smoking and family type on saliva cotinine in UK ethnic minority children: a cross sectional study.

Authors:

Melissa J Whitrow (melissa.whitrow@adelaide.edu.au)
Seeromanie Harding (seeromanie@sphsu.mrc.ac.uk)
Maria J Maynard (maria@sphsu.mrc.ac.uk)

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Author’s response to reviews: see over
Dear BioMed Central Editorial Team

Re: Manuscript no. 2131464126288691

Thank you for forwarding the comments from the reviewers. Our sincere apologies for the time taken to respond, the first author has been on extended leave. Below are the responses to points raised by the reviewers.

Reviewer 1
No further comments

Reviewer 2
No further comments

Reviewer 3
Comment 1
Tables number 2 and, specially, number 3 are difficult to understand. Authors explain that the other reviewers did not find difficulties in these tables although this is not true; reviewer 4 "suggest and kindly recommend to ELIMINATE table 3". Please, reformulate the presentation.
Response 1
We have removed Table 3 from the paper and updated the Results text accordingly.

C2
Nicotine metabolism is influenced by genetic factors, diet, age, sex, kidney disease, medications, etc. Please, review the role of the genetic in the cotinine metabolism, because substantial racial/ethnic differences are observed in nicotine metabolism. Discussion must be improved.
R2
We have added to the paragraph in the discussion on the differences in the metabolism and clearance of cotinine between ethnic groups.

Reviewer 4
Minor essential revisions
C1
Please, remove the "UK" in "White UK", or "British" in "White British", because even the other ethnic groups are presumably of British/UK nationality, and European people (e.g., men and women from Poland and other immigrants from EU countries) belong to the White category.
R1
The “White UK” category does not include White children from outside the UK and was a specific category self identified by the children. We checked the
correspondence of this ethnic category with parental ethnicity and parental and grandparental country of birth and this was consistent with a White British/UK ethnicity. Hence it would be misleading to refer to this group as “White”. We have added a sentence to the Materials and Methods section to clarify this.

C2
You have to add to the "model building" section in Materials & Methods that you used linear regression models with a random intercept function.

R2
We have added a sentence stating this.

Yours sincerely,

M Whitrow
S Harding
M Maynard