Author's response to reviews

Title: Tools to support evidence-informed public health decision making

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Version: 3
Date: 2 July 2014

Author's response to reviews: see over
July 2, 2014

Editorial Board
BMC Public Health

Dear Editorial Board:

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to editors comments for the manuscript “Tools to support evidence-informed public health decision making” to BMC Public Health.

The following provides a point-by-point response to address the editor comments in the revised manuscript.

Sincerely,

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<th>Editors’ Comments</th>
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<td>1. Ethics statement</td>
<td>This study did receive the appropriate ethics approval. To reflect this, the following sentence was added in lines 118-120: This study received ethics approval from the McMaster University Research Ethics Board and the ethics boards of each participating health department.</td>
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<td>We note that the manuscript does not contain a statement of ethics approval. Please add the name and affiliation of the ethics committee that approved the study. If no ethics approval was necessary please add a statement to that effect in the revised manuscript, adding either that it complies with national regulations, together with a reference which supports this, or that a local named ethics committee ruled that no formal ethics approval was required in this case.</td>
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| 2. RATS guidelines for qualitative research In accordance with BioMed Central editorial policies (http://www.biomedcentral.com/about/editorialpolicies#StandardsofReporting), could you please ensure that the qualitative component of your study adheres to the RATS guidelines for reporting qualitative studies (http://www.biomedcentral.com/authors/rats), and add a statement to that effect in the Methods section. | The authors have retrieved the RATS guidelines to ensure that the qualitative component of the study is in adherence. A statement has been added on lines 135-136 and reference was added. To ensure adherence, the following revisions were made:  
- “A purposive sample” was added on line 142  
- On line 145 the sentence “all staff who agreed to participate provided informed consent” and on lines 309-310 the phrase “participants who agreed to be interviewed” were added to clarify that consent was obtained.  
- Lines 145-147 clarify how the staff were invited to participate in the interviews. The sentence “One member of the research team (RT) invited these staff, via email, to participate in a telephone interview” was added.  
- On lines 154-156, the following sentence was added to describe the end of data collection: “Data collection, via interviews, was considered complete when all identified staff had either declined to participate or were interviewed.” |