Author's response to reviews

Title: Colon Cancer Screening Among African American Church Members: A Qualitative and Quantitative Study Of Patient-Provider Communication

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PDF covering letter
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Iratxe Puebla
Assistant Editor
BMC Public Health

Dear Iratxe,

We appreciate the thorough and thoughtful review of our manuscript Colorectal Cancer Screening Among African American Church Members: A Qualitative and Quantitative Study Of Patient-Provider Communication (MS: 5459783832391996)

We have carefully reviewed the comments received and have responded to each comment below or have changed our manuscript to include suggestions made.

Thank you,

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1. Reviewer: L.F. McMahon

**Suggestion:** No mention of the number of church members approached to reach the 397 who completed the survey.

**Response:** An explanation is now included in the Methods section and addresses the recruitment process for this study.

**Suggestion:** Potential confounding of communication and knowledge.

**Response:** This is addressed in the Results section…there is no interaction of communication and knowledge.

**Suggestion:** Patient’s perception of the doctor’s recommendation for CRC screening and if a physician has a negative or neutral perception of the value of CRC screening.

**Response:** The patient’s perception of the doctor’s beliefs about recommending CRC screening was not measured in this study and this is clarified in the Limitations section.

**Suggestion:** Recommendations on top of page 10 are not supported from results of this study.

**Response:** The recommendations listed on page 10 have been revised.

**Suggestion:** Potential problem of clustering by the physicians in the analyses was not mentioned

**Response:** A comment about the potential clustering of physicians in this study has been added in the limitations section of the manuscript

**Suggestion:** Conclusions are much too strong.

**Response:** The conclusions have been toned down based on the study design.
2. Reviewer: J.J. Dignam

**Suggestion:** Table 4; unclear how ANOVA was used in the analyses.
**Response:** Table 4; An explanation of the reason for using ANOVA has been added the table.

**Suggestion:** Table 5 needs clarification.
**Response:** Table 5. Details have been added to the table for clarity.

**Suggestion:** Revise title to colorectal (from colon).
**Response:** The title has been changed to include “Colorectal”.

**Suggestion:** p-values cannot equal zero.
**Response:** p-values listed have been changed to p<0.0001.

**Suggestion:** Paragraph about interaction (Table 6) needs clarification.
**Response:** Table 6 has been revised and a new paragraph added near the end of the Results section for clarification.

**Suggestion:** First sentence, last paragraph places onus on patient.
**Response:** Last paragraph. Onus on the patient has been toned down and is now directed at both the patient and the provider.

**Suggestion:** Refusal rate among those who were recommended for screening
**Response:** Information added regarding those who did not have screening even though physician recommended.

**Suggestion:** Under utilization of screening should be discussed more.
**Response:** More information about this topic has been added to the Discussion section.
3. Reviewer: C.N. Klabunde

**Suggestion:** Provide web address for WATCH project.

**Response:** WATCH web address: added to the 1st sentence in the Methods section.

**Suggestion:** Focus groups: describe groups more, themes, and analysis.

**Response:** Focus group. Information regarding the main topics covered in the focus groups is in the paper and is located in that section on page 4 and 5. More information has been added regarding data analysis, factor analysis, and when the focus groups were held. A limited number of quotes were used because they represent repetitive comments made by the participants.

**Suggestion:** Methods. Survey details and methods used are missing.

**Response:** Methods (baseline survey): Information regarding the baseline survey has been added to this section. The baseline survey is not located on the web site. Information regarding recruitment of participants has been added and is located in the baseline survey section.

**Suggestion:** Results. Move first two paragraphs to Methods.

**Response:** The first two paragraphs were moved to the Methods section as suggested. The general goal of the intervention was described and is located in the 1st paragraph in the Methods section.

**Suggestion:** Organization is confusing and describe testing methods.

**Response:** Manuscript has been reorganized for clarification, and different CRC testing methods are now described in the manuscript. Tests discussed in the survey were FOBT, Flexible sigmoidoscopy, digital rectal exam, double contrast barium enema, and colonoscopy. Focus group information was used to develop the items for the survey and information is provided under focus group heading. Only data from the baseline survey participants are provided in the Results section.

**Suggestion:** Table 2 not clearly labeled; Table 3 could use a descriptive title, change order of Table 3 and 4.

**Response:** Information has been added to Table 2 for clarity; Title of Table 3 has been changed to be more descriptive; order of Tables has been changed.

**Suggestion:** Table 4. Change “population” to “participants” and define “other”

**Response:** Words changed and defined in Table 4.

**Suggestion:** Discussion. Direction of association and non-representative nature of the study needs to be discussed.

**Response:** Discussion. Information regarding the direction of the association between CRC knowledge and screening has been added to the discussion, and more information regarding generalizability has been added to the limitation section.