Author's response to reviews

Title: An evaluation of a morphine public health programme for cancer and AIDS pain relief in Sub-Saharan Africa

Authors:

Dorothy E Logie (DeLogie@aol.com)
Richard Harding (richard.harding@kcl.ac.uk)

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All the points below have been adjusted within the text.

1. Reviewer's comments (Leana Ria Uys)

Ethical approval
Ethical approval was granted by the Ethics Committees of Liverpool School for Tropical Medicine and Hospice Africa Uganda.
Permission from participants was obtained by reading a standard permission sheet which explained about the survey, how it originated and reason for carrying it out, that it was confidential, voluntary, and would report anonymously. This was translated into local languages and either read out or given to the patient or staff member taking part.

2. Reviewer's comments (Liliana De Lima)

Are there limits to number of days, doses, or amount which prescribers can prescribe for one patient? No
Clarify types of pain. Oral morphine is used for cancer, HIV/AIDS pain and occasionally for sickle cell crisis (though these patients do not usually present to palliative care)
Data on consumption of morphine in Uganda is quoted in the text as DDDs and compared with other countries. The information is from INCB. Uganda uses 9 DDD per day (2000).
We have inserted the WHO scheduling (schedule 2) for drugs of addiction alongside the description of morphine as a Class A drug.
We have included a new table showing the myths and barriers to the use of morphine in some countries.