Author's response to reviews

Title: Albinism in Africa as a public health issue

Authors:

Esther S Hong (esther.hong@ucsf.edu)
Hajo Zeeb (zeebh@who.int)
Michael H Repacholi (repacholim@who.int)

Version: 4 Date: 11 July 2006

Author's response to reviews: see over
03 July, 2006

To the BMC Editors,

We have the pleasure of resubmitting our manuscript entitled "Albinism in Africa" to BMC. After viewing the comments from the peer reviewers’ reports, we have made the following revisions accordingly.

- In the discussion section, we clearly state that there are shortcomings of the survey results, mainly that all the reported data are anecdotal rather than evidence-based. An example of the socio-economic status among people of albinism was inserted in this section of the paper. We state that not all people living with albinism are of lower socio-economic class but that this is just a generalized perspective on the matter in a particular country that returned the survey.

- WHO Pilot Survey
  - Use of traditional medicines: We state that although there were accounts of traditional medicine use for albinism, it was difficult to extrapolate the significance of these reports, given the anecdotal basis for most of the survey responses.
  - Clarified the separation into Anglophone, Francophone and Lusophone countries: It was purely for language purposes for the survey rather than for analytical comparisons.

- Abstract/Introduction: OCA2 was corrected to be the tyrosine positive type of albinism in the abstract and also in the introduction. Furthermore, in the introduction, the prevalence values of 1 in 2661 and 1 in 3990 were replaced with 1 in 1000 representing the Tonga of Zimbabwe and also the Pedi in South Africa.

- The term “albino” is a negative label on an individual. Therefore, we ensured that the term “albino” was replaced with “people with albinism” throughout the publication.

We hope these revisions clarify the points addressed by the reviewers and look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,

Esther S. Hong
Hajo Zeeb, MD.
Michael Repacholi, PhD.