Author's response to reviews

Title: Knowledge of vitamin D and perceptions and attitudes towards sunlight among Chinese middle-aged and elderly women: a population survey in Hong Kong

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Author's response to reviews: see over
Dear Dr Pemberton

Re: Manuscript ID 2143553974104150
Knowledge of Vitamin D and perceptions and attitudes towards sunlight among Chinese
Middle-aged and elderly women: a population survey in Hong Kong

Thank you for your letter together with the reviewers’ comments. We thank the reviewers
for their helpful comments and we have amended the manuscript accordingly. I hereby
reply the reviewers point-by-point:

Reviewer: Michael Holick

1. SPF>15 was chosen because majority of the sunscreen products in Hong Kong are
>15. This information is added to the “Discussion” section, page 11, last paragraph.
We thank the reviewer for pointing out the reference of Matsuoka et al JECM
64:1165, 1987 and this reference is added as reference number 12.
2. We thank the reviewer for pointing out the reference of Webb et al JCEM 67:373,
1988. The discussion relating to this reference is added to the “Discussion” section
page 12, second paragraph, and this reference is added as reference number 13.

Reviewer: Tuan V Nguyen

General comment: we agree with the reviewer that Asian women prefer paler skin and
this may be the reason for their dislike in going under the sun. Unfortunately, this study
was not designed to find out the reason for not going under the sun, and we could only
speculate the current cultural trend for paler skin as a contributing factor for poor sunlight
exposure. This discussion is in page 12, first paragraph.

Specific comments:
1. A paragraph on the limitations of the study is added to the end of the
“Discussion” on page 14. The limitation of the moderate response rate is added.
2. The telephone survey was in fact pre-tested and validated by face-to-face
interview. This information is added to page 6, the first sentence under “Survey
questions”.
3. The primary end point of the telephone survey was to determine the knowledge
and vitamin D and perceptions and attitudes towards sunlight among Chinese
middle-aged and elderly women in Hong Kong. All questions asked during the
telephone survey are listed in Table 1 and all data collected are presented in this
manuscript.
4. As advised by the reviewer, the discussion on 60% of the respondents were indoor workers is added to page 14, line 5 of the first paragraph.

5. In this survey, there is no separate question on the education level as previous census survey by the Hong Kong Government documented very close correlation between occupation and education level and socio-economic status. For cost-effectiveness of the study, there is only one question on occupation. Thus we could not examine the independent effect of education and socio-economic status. This discussion is added to the paragraph on limitations of the study (page 14, first paragraph).

6. As advised by the reviewer, logistic regression analysis model was used to identify factors affecting awareness and knowledge of vitamin D. Age, occupation, subjects who liked going in the sun and subjects who spent more than 2 hours in the sun in the past week were factors associated with a positive response to the question “Have you heard of vitamin D”. Age was the only predictive factor for giving correct answers to the two questions on the action of vitamin D and the sources of vitamin D. This information is added to the second paragraph of page 10, and also to the “Results” section of the abstract.

Minor Essential Revisions: the labels on the figures are amended.

Attached please find the amended manuscript. I hope you would reconsider publishing our manuscript.

Yours Sincerely,

Annie Kung