Author's response to reviews

Title: Maternal perspectives on the use of probiotics in infants: a cross sectional survey

Authors:

Sarah L Bridgman (sarah.bridgman@ualberta.ca)
Meghan B Azad (meghan.azad@ualberta.ca)
Catherine J Field (cjfield@ualberta.ca)
Nicole Letourneau (nicole.letourneau@ucalgary.ca)
David W Johnston (davidw.johnston@albertahealthservices.ca)
Bonnie J Kaplan (bonnie.kaplan@albertahealthservices.ca)
Anita L Kozyrskyj (kozyrsky@ualberta.ca)

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Author's response to reviews: see over
Re: Manuscript Submission – Response to reviewer comments

Dear Dr. Rowles,

As requested in your email dated July 18th, 2014 we have made the following revisions to the submission of our manuscript following peer review:

Discretionary revisions

1. Clarification on the incentive offered during our study has been added (line 116-117).
2. We’d like to thank the reviewer for highlighting the relevant study by Sesham et al. on parental perspectives of probiotics use in preterm infants. We have now referenced this in our discussion (line 252).
3. We have taken the decision to keep Figures 2 and 3 as separate images.
4. The mean age in months of the youngest child in the household at time of survey response has now been added to the manuscript (line 149-150) and Table 1.

Minor essential revisions

1. The previous version of our manuscript acknowledged that use of probiotics may have a more permanent impact on gut microbiota in infants (line 278-279) verses children and adults, however to differentiate further we have changed “adults and children” to “adults and older children” (line 277).
2. Additional information on enrollment of women into the APrON study has been added as requested (line 94-103).
3. Further information on statistical methods used has been included in the “Data Analysis” section (line 128-134). Additional information on post hoc tests has also been included in the results (line 220-224).
4. We have assumed that the reviewer was referring to Table 4 as opposed to Table 2. We have formatted Table 4 as requested.
5. Please refer to point 3 above.
6. This section (line 166-193) has been re-ordered to reflect the order in which questions were presented in the survey. We hope that this is clearer and satisfies reviewer concerns.
7. It is our plan to report the additional results of the survey, which relate to neonatal screening and self blame, in a separate ethics focused paper following the current descriptive report, hence their
omission from this manuscript. Clarification of the questions reported in the manuscript has been added (line 109-111).

Additional amendments

1. Line 217: P value corrected to <0.001 and also corrected in Table 4.
2. Line 212: a minor correction to the values of the statistics reported was required.

We would like to thank you for your consideration of our manuscript and look forward to publication.

Sincerely,

Anita Kozyrskyj, PhD
Professor
Department of Pediatrics, University of Alberta