Author's response to reviews

Title: Cost and Surgical Impact of Telephonic Care Support of Populations at Risk for Musculoskeletal Preference-Sensitive Surgeries in a Randomized Quality Study of Interactive Voice Response with a Transfer to Health Coaching

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Author's response to reviews:

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Adrian Aldcroft
Executive Editor
BMC Medical Informatics and Decision Making
BioMed Central
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United Kingdom

Dear Mr. Aldcroft,

On June 27, 2012, I received an email from April Anne Gerobin requesting a resubmission of the manuscript entitled: “Cost and Surgical Impact of Telephonic Support of Populations at Risk for Musculoskeletal Preference-Sensitive Surgeries in a Randomized Quality Study of Interactive Voice Response with Transfer to Health Coaching”. The reason for the request was that the manuscript was lacking statements about ethical review in accordance with the Helsinki Declaration on human subject research.

We greatly appreciate the opportunity to resubmit the manuscript. We had inadvertently removed language related to this topic just prior to submitting the draft manuscript.

It is important to note that we did not submit this study for ethical review through an institutional review board. This study was designed for quality improvement exploration, comparing two forms of outreach to engage individuals in telephone based support services. With this quality improvement focus, not seeking ethical
review was well-supported (Casarett et. al., JAMA, 2000). Potential harm to study participants was both very small and very unlikely. We have added text to the methods section that describes and supports our decision not to seek ethical review. While we did not put text to this effect in the manuscript, we have subsequent to this study tested other forms of outreach with formal research protocols, have submitted these for ethical review, and have received waivers of informed consent in every case.

We are grateful to have the opportunity to resubmit the manuscript and look forward to comment and review.

Sincerely,

David Veroff