Author's response to reviews

Title: Childhood tuberculosis desk guide and monitoring: An intervention to improve case management in Pakistan

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Author's response to reviews: see over
**Cover letter:**

This is in reference to our submitted manuscript in BMC health services research entitled “Childhood tuberculosis deskguide and monitoring: An intervention to improve case management in Pakistan”. The editor of BMC advised us to submit the manuscript in the BMC health services research, after editing according to reviewers’ comments.

Please find below the point-by-point response to the referees and editorial comments. The revisions have been made in the revised manuscript with ‘red font’.

**Reviewer 1:**

1) It is important to emphasise that what is being reported is increasing numbers of children being treated for TB - not necessarily (though it may be) more children with TB being treated - because of difficulties with confirmation

Response: The discussion section has been edited in the revised manuscript.

2) Diagnosis in those under 5 - the most at-risk group for disease and poor outcome with disseminated disease - is clearly a challenge in this setting

Response: The discussion section has been edited in the revised manuscript
Reviewer 2:

Minor Essential Revisions

1) Under results section in 'case notification', it should be Table 2 rather than table 1.

Response: The table number has re-numbered in the revised manuscript

2) Similarly under 'characteristics of TB in children' it should be Table 1 instead of Table 2.

Response: The table has been re-numbered in the revised manuscript

3) Also in Table 2, control district A, column: *(2007) and row: childhood TB cases, there is a slight mistake in formatting, the 6 of 106 has moved down.

Response: The table has been edited in the revised manuscript

4) Under discussion section line 15, 'minimal additional resource allocation' can be used instead of 'minimal addition resource allocation'.

Response: The discussion has been edited in the revised manuscript

Discretionary Revisions

1) A pilot childhood TB care conducted in ten districts of Pakistan in each of the four provinces, is mentioned in the 'study sites and settings' of the manuscript. It would be good to include a brief description of the pilot in the 'introduction' of the manuscript, like the time-period of implementation and package provided for childhood care etc.

Response: Description has been added in the introduction section of the revised manuscript.

2) Study design should include the type of study that is planned (e.g. a prospective cohort). It should be included here that there will be one intervention district and two control districts.

Response: The study design has been edited in the revised manuscript.

3) Also a brief explanation would be required about the reasoning for choosing two control districts instead of one against one intervention district. Was there any added benefit of the control district B included in the study?
Response: The section study site and setting has been edited in the revised manuscript

4) A little re-phrasing is required in the 'data collection/data analysis' part of the manuscript. It would be a good idea to describe the pre-intervention and post-intervention comparisons in a separate paragraph from the control vs. intervention comparisons. Although it is very well presented but the reader has to go back and forth for reference.

Response: The section data collection/data analysis has been edited in the revised manuscript. However, we consider that the current presentation of comparisons pre-intervention and post-intervention and control vs intervention is inline with the objectives and description in the method section. Hence a separate paragraph in this case is not required.

5) A little bit on the differences in results seen in both control districts A & B might be good to add in the discussion section. Also it would be good to add a commentary on the reasons why differences were observed between the two control districts although the selection criteria of the districts on baseline demographic and geographic factors was well matched.

Response: The discussion section has been edited in the revised manuscript
Editorial comments:

Abstract:
Please restructure and improve the abstract. The abstract should be composed of the following 4 sections: Background, Method, Result, Conclusion and should be no longer than 350 words.

Response: The abstract has been edited in the revised manuscript