Author's response to reviews

Title: Determinants of condom uptake among HIV voluntary counselling and testing clients: experiences from a hospital-based study in south India

Authors:

Rebecca Myerson (myerson@uw.edu)
Susanna M Makela (susanna.makela@phfi.org)
C Chandrasekhar (drcc.ghtm@gmail.com)
Siju Mathew (sijumat@gmail.com)
Sourabh Chakraborty (sourabhc@hotmail.com)

Version: 2 Date: 9 December 2011

Author's response to reviews: see over
Dear Flory Mae Calumpita,

On behalf of my coauthors, it is my pleasure to submit the revised version of our article “Determinants of condom uptake among HIV voluntary counselling and testing clients: experiences from a hospital-based study in south India” for your consideration. I hope this revised version is now acceptable for publication in *BMC Health Services*.

Please find a point by point response to the reviewer’s suggestions below, indicating the changes we made and changes we were unable to make.

- **Changes we made:**
  
  o We incorporated a paragraph supported with references on behavior change in small time frames into the Background section as well as the Limitations section.

  o We incorporated the suggested changes to the Methods and Limitations sections, highlighting the type of data analyzed and indicating the limitations of recall bias and information bias. We clarified the point that the data were tracked prospectively rather than retrospectively.

  o We explicitly indicated that we received ethical approval from the GHTM IRB (see Data section).

  o We revised the Discussion section to spend more time on the links between our study and relevant previous research.

  o We revised the Conclusion section according to the reviewers’ recommendations to make it short and punchy and to highlight take-away messages.

  o We removed the figures and submitted them in separate Word and TIFF files only as specified in the Authors’ Instructions online.

  o We created a flow chart depicting the study population as well as subset and matched set (see the new Figure 1)

  o Table 3 was reformatted according to the reviewers' suggestions (including number of cases, listing main effects first, and listing demographic first). Number of cases was included in Table 4. We also placed lines around each cell of numbers as specified in the Authors’ Instructions online.
We defended the interaction terms in Table 3 and pointed the reader to the graphical depiction of the interactions in the data (see Statistical Analysis section).

- **Changes we are unable to make:**

  - We cannot create new tabulations at this time. Due to IRB restrictions, the data are kept on premises at the GHTM and access is restricted. Thus we cannot make the following changes:

    - The reviewers requested that we elongate the minimum time period between first and last visit for the purposes of the analysis.

    - The reviewers requested that “In Table 4, when findings from the raw data are provided, overall means for less complete VCT services and more complete VCT services should be provided.”

Thank you so much for your time. Please feel free to write me at rmyerson1@uchicago.edu or rebeccamyerson@gmail.com with any further questions.

Best wishes,

Rebecca Myerson