Author's response to reviews

Title: Association of Socio-Economic Status with Diabetes Prevalence and Utilization of Diabetes Care

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Author's response to reviews: see over
July 26, 2006

Dr. Alexander Pemberton

RE: MS: 1305968831011107

Dear Dr. Pemberton:

Thank you for giving us the opportunity to revise and resubmit the above-mentioned manuscript. We have revised the manuscript in response to the editor and reviewer comments that you provided us in your e-mail dated July 17, 2006. Below, we provide an itemized summary of the changes made to the paper. Editor and reviewer comments are shown in bold, followed by our responses. Additions to the manuscript itself are bolded.

Editor’s comments:

1. We request that you make some formatting changes to the manuscript, details of these changes are below. Your cover letter should include details on how the requested formatting changes have been incorporated into the manuscript.

   We have reviewed the instructions to author’s and the templates provided. In keeping with the journal’s formatting preferences, we have restructured the title page; ensured the appropriate font size and format was used for all major headings and subheadings; and will upload our figure as a separate figure file.

Reviewer’s comments:

1. Some discussion of this issue (ecologic fallacy) would be appropriate.

   We have expanded the limitation section (on page --, paragraph --) so that we now state explicitly that this was an ecologic study. We also added lines describing what the ecologic fallacy is and how the readers should be cautious at drawing inferences regarding individuals from these data.

2. In the final sentence of the article, the use of the word “individuals” is unjustified; the findings regard areas rather than individuals.

   We have revised the wording of the amended last sentence (page --, paragraph --) to more accurately reflect that our conclusions apply to low income regions, and that we are only making inferences regarding individuals based on ecologic findings, groups of individuals only.
[[[Doreen: you’ll see in the paper that I chose to bold the entire sentence rather than just a brief passage in the paper.]]]

3. P.8 last 2 lines: I believe that “no association with age” should read “an association with age”

The reviewer is correct. The line has been changed accordingly (see page ---, paragraph ---).

4. P. 11, paragraph 1, l. 12: the reference for Dunlop, et al., should be 8, not 7.

The reference has been changed accordingly.

5. P. 3, Abstract, Methods, line 6: change “chi-squared” to “chi-square”

This has been done.

6. P. 4, Background, line 1: change “it’s” to “its”.

This has been done.

7. P. 4, Background, paragraph 2, line 6: reference is shown as [8,].

The comma within the paratheses has been removed.

8. P. 5, Methods, paragraph 1, line 6: “understudy” should be “under study”.

This has been done.

9. P. 6, Methods, paragraph 3, line 6: the numbers of individuals were “calculated” should be changed to a different verb, perhaps “included” would make better sense.

The word “calculated” was not changed. The proportions of individuals over the age of 65 per dissemination and the proportions of people who had a university level education per dissemination area were indeed calculated from Statistics Canada data. We changed the verb to “determined” (page ---, paragraph ---).

10. P. 7, line 3, should read either “Chi-square analysis was” or “Chi-square analyses were”.

This has been changed (the latter wording suggestion was used).

11. P. 8, paragraph 1, discussion of figure 1C should perhaps note that one of the proportions is significantly different from the others.
This change has not been made. Figure 1, panel C, suggests that the proportions are very similar across quintiles. Furthermore, the analysis presented in Table 4 demonstrates that there is not a statistically significant difference in the proportion of individuals referred to the DEC, when controlling for diabetes prevalence, between these proportions.

12. P. 9 Discussion, paragraph 2, line 5: I think that “so far as” would be preferable to “so far that”.
   This wording suggestion has been incorporated.

13. P.11, paragraph 1, line 11: shouldn’t “ie” be “i.e.,”.
   This has been changed as per suggestion.

14. Incidentally, the reference to the study on p. 12 as “cross-sectional” may mislead the careless reader into believing this is a cross-sectional study rather than an ecologic one.
   We agree that this wording may be slightly misleading. We now explicitly state (on page ---, paragraph ---) that this was an ecologic study and discuss in more detail the implications of this study design with respect to the interpretation of the results.
We thank the editors and reviewers for these comments, and hope that you will be satisfied with our responses and revisions. The paper has definitely improved through these revisions.

We look forward to hearing back from you.

Yours sincerely,

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