Author's response to reviews

Title: Addressing conflicts of interest in Public Private Partnerships

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Version: 3 Date: 30 June 2010

Author's response to reviews: see over
Dear editors,

RE: 213776076353423 – Addressing Conflicts of Interest in Public Private Partnerships.

The authors wish to thank the editors and reviewers for their helpful feedback. Please see below a point-by-point response to the formatting change requests.

We look forward to hearing back from you.

Yours sincerely,

Emmanuel B. Omobowale
Abdallah S. Daar
Peter A. Singer* (*Corresponding author)

Author’s response to reviewers’ reports and editorial requests:

Please note that the reviewers’ report and editorial requests has been highlighted in bold italics. The author’s point-by-point response to the comments follows immediately thereafter in regular text.

Reviewer’s report

Title: Addressing conflicts of interest in Public Private Partnerships

Version: 2 Date: 21 June 2010

Reviewer: Robert Holloway

Reviewer’s report:

Would change “prevent” to “mitigate” on top of page 7, second line.

AUTHORS’ RESPONSE:

This amendment has been made.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

Declaration of competing interests:
Reviewer's report

Title: Addressing conflicts of interest in Public Private Partnerships

Version: 2 Date: 21 June 2010

Reviewer: Joel Lexchin

Reviewer's report:
The authors have answered most of my initial concerns but there are still a few issues that I feel need to be addressed.

Minor Essential Revisions:
If the authors feel that COIs in PPPs cannot be avoided then they should remove the word “avoided” from the Abstract.

AUTHORS' RESPONSE:
This amendment has been made. The word “avoided” has been replaced with “mitigated” in the Abstract.

In discussing an external monitor it is important to make the point that the external monitor should not be doing other work for the organization that might seem to be dependent on the outcome of the monitoring.

AUTHORS' RESPONSE:
We agree. A relevant sentence has been added.

It’s not clear to me why the authors chose to focus most of their conclusion on one issue, external monitoring and did not discuss things such as public disclosure of COIs, having a whistle blower policy, etc.

AUTHORS' RESPONSE:
We have added a sentence to address this. It is a frontier issue addressed by relatively few.

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.
Declaration of competing interests:
I declare that I have no competing interests

Editorial requests:
- Please include a 'Competing interests' section between the Conclusions and Authors' contributions. If there are none to declare, please write 'The authors declare that they have no competing interests'.
- Please include an Authors' contributions section before the Acknowledgements and Reference list.
- We strongly encourage you to include an Acknowledgements section between the Authors' contributions section and Reference list. Please acknowledge anyone who contributed towards the study by making substantial contributions to conception, design, acquisition of data, or analysis and interpretation of data, or who was involved in drafting the manuscript or revising it critically for important intellectual content, but who does not meet the criteria for authorship. Please also include their source(s) of funding. Please also acknowledge anyone who contributed materials essential for the study. Authors should obtain permission to acknowledge from all those mentioned in the Acknowledgements.
- Please list the source(s) of funding for the study, for each author, and for the manuscript preparation in the acknowledgements section. Authors must describe the role of the funding body, if any, in study design; in the collection, analysis, and interpretation of data; in the writing of the manuscript; and in the decision to submit the manuscript for publication.
- Please revise the structure you or Abstract by following these guidelines http://www.biomedcentral.com/bmcinthealthhumrights/ifora/?txt_jou_id=2038&txt_mst_id=2010.

AUTHORS’ RESPONSE:

These amendments have been made within the manuscript using track changes. “Competing interests,” “Authors’ contributions,” and “Acknowledgements” sections have been added to the manuscript. References were re-formatted according to requirements as stated on http://www.biomedcentral.com/info/ifora/medicine_journals. The Appendix has been re-named as Table 1 and separated from the manuscript text in a different doc file.

The authors would like to take the opportunity to thank the reviewers and editors once again for their helpful review of this work.

Emmanuel B. Omobowale
Abdallah S. Daar
Peter A. Singer* (*Corresponding author)