Author's response to reviews

Title: Associations of food group and nutrient intake, diet quality, and meal sizes between adults and children in the same household: a cross-sectional analysis of U.S. households

Authors:

Jennifer L Zuercher (jlzuerch@purdue.edu)
David A Wagstaff (daw22@psu.edu)
Sibylle Kranz (kranz@purdue.edu)

Version: 3 Date: 9 November 2011

Author's response to reviews: see over
November 3, 2011

Nehme Gabriel
Editor-in-Chief
Nutrition Journal

Attached please find the revised manuscript "Associations of food group and nutrient intake, diet quality, and meal sizes between adults and children in the same household: a cross-sectional analysis of U.S. households,” co-authored by Jennifer Zuercher, David Wagstaff, and Sibylle Kranz for continued consideration for publication in Nutrition Journal.

We again thank the reviewer for her comments. After careful consideration and consultation with Dr. George McCabe – Dr. Kranz’s statistical collaborator on a number of studies, we realized that the comments from reviewer 2 were based on her perspective of the statistical value, or lack thereof, of nutrient cut points. Therefore, we adjusted the language in the manuscript to reflect the importance of having dietary intakes approaching or trending towards the goal, rather than using the cut point as value of specific importance.

We hope that the revisions to our manuscript have provided sufficient clarification to our aim for acceptance into the Journal.

We look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

Sibylle Kranz, PhD RD (Corresponding author)
Associate Professor, Member of the Ingestive Behavior Research Center
Department of Foods and Nutrition Purdue University
204 Stone Hall, 700 W. State Street
West Lafayette, IN 47907
phone: 765-494-6758
email: Kranz@purdue.edu
Reviewer's report
Title: Associations of food group and nutrient intake, diet quality, and meal sizes between adults and children in the same household: a cross-sectional analysis of U.S. households

Version: 2 Date: 11 September 2011
Reviewer: Sharon Kirkpatrick

Reviewer's report:
A number of the minor points that I raised in my previous review have been noted by the authors and revisions were made to address them. I continue to find the topic of intrahousehold food intake patterns to be an interesting one. However, the major weakness has not been addressed.

Major concerns (requiring major compulsory revisions):

It is not statistically sound to average intakes over multiple recalls and to create a binary variable indicating whether or not a recommendation or requirement was met. I had previously suggested the DRI assessment report as a source of information on estimating usual intakes and comparing them to requirement distributions. The authors suggest that it would be inappropriate to apply methods discussed in that report to the data, which are over 10 years old (which is a little confusing given that they are applying requirement estimates from the DRI reports to these same data). The theory behind the statistical methods described in the assessment report for appropriately assessing intakes in relation to requirement estimates pre-date the DRI report by a number of years. In short, this paper does not use currently accepted techniques to assess adequacy of intakes (e.g., the EAR and AI are being used in ways that are not recommended by the IOM) and should not be published.

For the section on eating occasions, approaches could be taken to use both days of recall data – for example, predicting probability of consuming breakfast as part of the method of estimating usual intake at breakfast.

Response: We appreciate the reviewers continued concerns as well as her willingness to continue to work with us to improve our manuscript. While we acknowledge the potential issue with using a binary variable to indicate whether a recommendation or requirement was met, our focus is not on the estimation of prevalence; our focus is on relationships. Thus, we believe this comparison is still relevant and important. We have modified this aim, as well as the text throughout the manuscript, to reflect the relationship as “trending toward meeting” a recommendation. We hope that this is an acceptable modification.

In relation to the section on eating occasions, we appreciate the reviewer’s suggestion of steps to take to incorporate both days of recall, though we are still most comfortable using only one day so as to not underestimate due to missed.skipped meals.