Author's response to reviews

Title: Maternal iron metabolism gene variants modify umbilical cord blood lead levels by gene-environment interaction: a birth cohort study

Authors:

Mateusz P Karwowski (matt.karwowski@childrens.harvard.edu)
Allan C Just (acjust@hsph.harvard.edu)
David C Bellinger (david.bellinger@childrens.harvard.edu)
Rebecca Jim (rjim@neok.com)
Earl L Hatley (ehatley@neok.com)
Adrienne S Ettinger (adrienne.ettinger@yale.edu)
Howard Hu (Howard.Hu@utoronto.ca)
Robert O Wright (robert.wright@mssm.edu)

Version: 3
Date: 14 September 2014

Author's response to reviews: see over
Dear Dr. Pearce,

On behalf of my co-authors, we extend our thanks for your diligent review and acceptance of our manuscript, ‘Maternal iron metabolism gene variants modify umbilical cord blood lead levels by gene-environment interaction: a birth cohort study’ (MS: 6827582541240797), for publication. We are also greatly appreciative of the efforts of the reviewers as their comments significantly improved the quality of our work.

As requested, we provide point-by-point responses to the formatting requests at the end of this cover letter. The revised manuscript has been resubmitted as directed.

The manuscript remains an original work, has not been previously published whole or in part, and is not under consideration for publication elsewhere. No animals were used in this research. Participation of human subjects did not occur until after informed consent was obtained. None of the authors have actual or potential competing interests to disclose. All authors have read the revised manuscript, agree the work is ready for resubmission to *Environmental Health*, and accept responsibility for the manuscript’s contents.

Again, we extend our sincere appreciation. Please do not hesitate to contact me should you have any further questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

Matt Karwowski
The following are point-by-point responses to formatting requests:

**As for the formatting, throughout the manuscript remove the line numbering.**

Line numbering has been removed.

**On the title page change the bullets before the institutional addresses to superscript numbers and place the numbers after the respective authors' names and removing the names after the addresses.**

Bullets have been changed to superscript numbers and associated with respective author names. The bracketed names that followed the institution addresses have been removed.

**The authors' emails should be listed under the heading Email addresses as author's initials:email address and separated by semi-colons.**

Author emails have been listed under the heading ‘Email addresses’ using the format “author initials: email address,” and separated by semi-colons.

**Remove the author's correspondence information and replace with *Corresponding author and placing the * after his superscript number(s).**

The author’s correspondence information has been removed and replaced with “*Corresponding author.” An asterisk has been placed after the corresponding author’s superscript numbering in the author list.

**Only the first letter of the headings should be capitalized.**

All headers have been edited so that only the first letter is capitalized.

**The abstract headings should be Background, Methods, Results, and Conclusions with the text below the headings and the colons removed.**

The abstract headings have been edited, text placed below headings, and colons removed.

**Remove the underlining in the text.**

All underlining has been removed.

**In the References, remove the issue numbers and list up to 30 authors before using et al.**

All references were updated using the ‘Endnote style file’ available on the Environmental Health ‘Instructions for authors’ website.

**For the tables, all horizontal lines should be visible.**

Horizontal lines have been added to all tables.
Please also ensure that your revised manuscript conforms to the journal style (http://www.ehjournal.net/info/instructions/). It is important that your files are correctly formatted.

The manuscript formatting has been updated to reflect the latest guidance provided on the aforementioned website. Additionally, the manuscript template available on this website was downloaded and stylistic changes made to our manuscript so that it mirrors the template. These changes include bolding titles and headers, adding dashes in Figure, Table, and Additional File names, and removing blank lines that were added unnecessarily.

Apart from the suggestions above, one additional change was made to the manuscript: an acknowledgement was made to the government institutions that provide partial funding for the primary author’s fellowship program.