Author's response to reviews

Title: Mobile phone text message intervention to reduce binge drinking among young adults: study protocol for a randomized controlled trial

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Author's response to reviews: see over
To Editors of Trials:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit our revised manuscript entitled, “Mobile phone text message intervention to reduce binge drinking among young adults: study protocol for a randomized controlled trial.” Overall, the peer review was enthusiastic about the manuscript. The two main issues that we address in the revised manuscript are as follows (with responses in bold):

1) If I got it right, participants of the "assessment-only" group do not get any financial incentive to report on their drinking habits. If so, please discuss shortly potential implications of this design (as the "1USD" gift in the intervention group may be a strong incentive to adhere to the study (or even to change behavior?)).

We now include a section describing remuneration for participation as follows:

“Participants are given the following material incentives to remain in the study: they are reimbursed $10 for completing the baseline assessments, $20.00 for completing the 3 month web-based assessment, $30.00 for completing the 6-month web-based assessments and $40.00 for completing the 9-month web-based assessments. For the SA+F and SA group, the cost of text messaging is covered in the flat fees for reimbursement for participation. The SA+F group has the opportunity to receive an additional $1.00 per completed Thursday and Sunday SMS dialog, for a maximum of $24.00 additional payment. We believe that the additional payment to the SA+F group would incentivize adherence to SMS dialog, which could have the intended effect of optimizing behavior change through improved self-monitoring.”

2) From the funding statement at the end of the manuscript I did not get a clue of the funding source of the authors (except Dr. Suffoletto). Please detail the funding body "behind the grant numbers"

We now explicate: “D. Clark is supported by R01AA016482 and P50DA05605 from the National Institute of Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA) at the National Institute of Health (NIH).”

3) We have also added a statement about follow-up assessment of alcohol abuse and dependence as follows: “At 9-month follow-up, all participants will complete a structured diagnostic assessment for determining DSM-IV diagnoses for alcohol abuse and
dependence. Individuals who meet alcohol abuse or dependence criteria will also receive alcohol treatment referrals."

We believe that the above changes benefit the manuscript and we look forward to publishing in Trials.

Sincerely,

Brian Suffoletto, MD MS