Author's response to reviews

Title: How explicable are differences between reviews that appear to address a similar research question? A review of reviews of physical activity interventions

Authors:

Jenny Woodman (j.woodman@ucl.ac.uk)
James Thomas Dr (j.thomas@ioe.ac.uk)
Kelly Dickson (k.dickson@ioe.ac.uk)

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Author's response to reviews:

Dear Editors,

Thank you for your feedback and the comments of the two peer reviewers who re-reviewed our paper. We note that the two reviewers are mostly satisfied with our changes and require only a few minor alterations which we are happy to make.

However, while we can appreciate the issue of currency, the request from the Associate Editor to update the searches is problematic for us. This work would involve: searching 21 electronic databases and 17 websites (at least, though there may be more now); conducting citation-chasing and contacting experts in the field; screening titles and abstracts; retrieving the full text of potentially relevant studies; data extraction and quality assessment; and updating the paper. This is a major undertaking - certainly not possible by 16th July - and, as we estimate the cost to be well in excess of £15k, this is not really feasible outside the context of a major funded systematic review. Thus, the issue of not updating the searches is less of us taking the "easy option", than doing what is possible.

While we appreciate the points made re the currency of its searches, and we could certainly find a stronger form of words to encapsulate this, we feel the paper makes a useful contribution this limitation notwithstanding. However, if updating the searches is a precondition for publication, we will regretfully need to withdraw the paper, as we do not have the resources available to do this. If this is not a precondition, then we will update and resubmit the paper as per the comments from the peer reviewers. (Please note the system wanted an 'updated' file, but the current version uploaded is the same as the one previously submitted.)

Best wishes, Jenny Woodman, James Thomas and Kelly Dickson.