Author’s response to reviews

Title: The Viral Prescription Pad - A Mixed Methods Study to Determine the Need for and Utility of an Educational Tool for Antimicrobial Stewardship in Primary Health Care

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Author’s response to reviews:

Dr. Tonkin-Crine,

We would like to thank you, Dr. Woods, and Dr. Lecky for your comments and suggestions. Please see below our responses to the final comments provided by the reviewers.

Donna Marie Lecky, PhD, MRes, BSc (Reviewer 2): Thank you for addressing my previous comments and concerns. I have two comments for this redraft

1. There is one essential change that needs to be made to the manuscript introduction, you write "...developed a "viral prescription pad" to be used as a tool during consults with patients suffering from viral infections, particularly uRTIs... This is an important groups of infections as the majority (90%) are viral in etiology..." As all viral infection are viral in etiology you either need to remove the "suffering from viral infections" OR the "particularly uRTIs" part of the first sentence.

The viral prescription pad was developed to help prescribers educate patients with viral illnesses about the appropriate use of antibiotics. The document focuses specifically on symptom management of upper respiratory tract infections. For these infections, about 90% are viral in etiology (there are 10% of cases which are caused by bacteria). For patients with a bacterial upper respiratory tract infection, the viral prescription pad would not be appropriate. However, for the vast majority of people who suffer from URTIs, they are viral and therefore do not require antibiotic treatment. Unfortunately, much antibiotic use in primary health care is for these cases of viral upper respiratory tract infections.

The relevant sentences in the introduction have been modified to better reflect this.
2. I believe the manuscript would benefit from streamlining. There is a lot of unnecessary repetition throughout the manuscript which makes it difficult to follow in places, for example, explaining the methods in the discussion where perhaps a simple heading to break up the three aspects of the study would suffice

Headings have been added throughout the discussion to indicate the specific aspects of the study being discussed.

Thank you,

Jason Vanstone