Author’s response to reviews

Title: The role of haematological indices in predicting early iron deficiency among pregnant women in an urban area of Sri Lanka

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Manuscript Number: (BHEM-S-18-00018R1)

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Version 3: Date: 15 November 2018
Response letter to Reviewer 1- Philip Crispin

Dear Sir,

I am very much grateful for accepting the manuscript "The role of haematological indices in predicting early iron deficiency among pregnant women in urban area of Sri Lanka" (BHEM-D-18-00018R1) and very much thankful for your constructive remarks, which are meant to improve the manuscript.

I have addressed (in italic letters) each of your concerns point by point and the amendments were done in the manuscript according to the comments given by both reviewers and are outlined as below.

Editorial Remarks 1

Major suggestion:

There are variety or red cell indices that may be used to detect iron depletion according to these results, with the respective cut-offs determined from the ROC curve, but it lacks a clinical interpretation on their use. Should enhanced iron replacement and follow up be offered to women who have any one of the parameters below the suggested cut-off.

Response-

The valuable remarks were discussed in the conclusion section

Location in the text

Conclusion section. Line 17-19, Page 16

Minor edits

Suggested changes (suggested grammatical / typographical changes):

Response-

Based on your valuable suggestions English editing has been done in whole manuscript to improve the grammar and the readability.

- P7:15 was should be were

Done the amendment, Location – Abstract. Line 13, page- 2
• P8: which is a much
Done the amendment, Location – Abstract. Line 2, page- 3
• P11:14 needs revision for grammar.
English editing has been done to improve the grammar and the readability.
Location – Introduction. Line 8-11, Page-5
• P11: 21-22. The prevention recommendations of WHO are for universal iron replacement and not based on haemoglobin readings. The references cited are not the WHO guidelines as stated. Reference 19 is 20 year old guidelines and therefore not current, so should be removed. Severe
I apologize for the misperception and have rephrased.
• P12:24. Which are a component
Amended.
Location –Introduction. Line 1, page – 6
• P13:11 ultrasound
Amended
Location –Methods. Line 15, Page – 6
• P13:44 clarify exclusion criteria as women who have a multiple pregnancy or multiple past pregnancies.
I atone for the misperception. It has been clarified as women who have a multiple pregnancy Location – Methods. Line 20, Page – 6
• P16:13-15, sensitivity and specificity probably shouldn't need to be explained.
The explanation was removed based on your valuable remarks
• P18:44. The authors note positive correlations between red cell indices and Hb and ferritin, but haven't stated in the method how correlations were to be performed. A test for normality has also been performed so should be reported.
I apologize for not to include the statistical method followed to obtain the correlation earlier. Please refer Location – Methods. Line 8-10, Page 9

Further, included the normality test report. Please refer the location – Method. Line 5-7, Page 9.

- P30: 6-10 needs grammatical editing.

Re-edited. Location – Conclusion. Line 14-20, Page 16

- High CRP is listed as an exclusion criteria twice and needs only to be stated once and the categorization as iron deficient likewise only needs to be done in methods, not results (P17:13).

Based on your valuable remarks the mentioned repeated phrases were removed appropriately.