Author's response to reviews

Title: A Retrospective cohort study of factors relating to the longitudinal change in birth weight

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Dear Editors,

Thank you for continuing to consider my manuscript, “A Retrospective cohort study of factors relating to the longitudinal change in birth weight.” We have received the reports of the reviewers and have made changes to our manuscript based on their comments. We are submitting our revised manuscript and have included below our detailed responses to their comments.

The manuscript has not been and will not be submitted to any other journal while it is under consideration by *BMC Pregnancy and Childbirth*. It was accepted and presented as a poster presentation at the Society for Gynecologic Investigation 58th Annual Scientific Meeting, March 16-19, 2011 Miami Beach FL. There are no other prior publications or submissions with any overlapping information, including studies and patients.

We continue to feel this manuscript would be of interest to readers of *BMC Pregnancy and Childbirth* as it deals with the timely issues of birth weight and fetal adiposity. Given the changing demographics in the obstetric population as well as the evolving understanding of how the *in utero* environment impacts childhood and adult health, we believe our results will further the understanding in the field and be hypothesis generating for other researchers and clinicians. We feel this article is suited to the wide, international readership of *BMC Pregnancy and Childbirth*.

This research is the product of all four authors. I, Kelly S Gibson, MD, collected the data, performed the initial analysis, and wrote the first draft of the manuscript. Dr. Waters assisted in study design, the initial analysis, and portions of the manuscript. Dr. Gunzler performed the secondary and advanced statistical analysis and critically reviewed the manuscript. Dr. Catalano provided guidance on the study design, assisted in data interpretation, and has critically reviewed the manuscript.

No honorarium, grant, or other form of payment was given to anyone to produce the manuscript. Each author listed on the manuscript has seen and approved the submission of this version of the manuscript and takes full responsibility for the manuscript. None of the authors report any conflicts of interest, specifically no conflicts of interest regarding the study design;
the collection, analysis, and interpretation of data; the writing of the report; or the decision to submit the paper for publication.

This project was approved by the MetroHealth System Institutional Review Board as protocol IRB10-00426 on 06/08/2010, and it is still currently approved.

Thank you again for your consideration,

Kelly S. Gibson, MD
Response to Editor’s Comments:
Thank you for submitting your revised manuscript. While the authors have done a good job of replying to the reviewers comments, a few additional revisions are necessary to the updated paper.

1) The r2 value for each model is quite low. Please elaborate on the implications of this in the discussion section.
   We have added to the Discussion section. “As birth weight is dependent on these and other, unaccounted for factors, the r2 values for multivariate analyses for BW, BL, and PI were each relatively low (0.05-0.24). Thus, while the variables entered into our model, including year, were significantly correlated, many other factors as described above may also affect the changes seen in BW over time.” (Page 9, Lines 185-188)

2) Tables and figures should be able to stand alone. For all figures where abbreviations are used, please include a description of all abbreviations in a footnote. Where non-standard abbreviations are used (such as AA) please write out in full where space permits (i.e. the first column in all tables)
   We have amended the table to list the full name of the rows and columns and added footnotes where appropriate.

3) Additionally, in table 1 please replace ?Mat? Age with ?Maternal? Age
   We have clarified this by changing it to read “Maternal Age.”

4) In Tables 2-Supplementary Table 3b ?male sex? is reported, yet in table 1 female sex is reported. Please make these consistent throughout
   We have made it male sex throughout the tables and paper for consistency.