Author's response to reviews

Title: Factors influencing timely initiation and completion of gestational diabetes mellitus screening and diagnosis - a qualitative study from Tamil Nadu, India.

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We would like to thank the reviewers for their positive comments to the work we have carried out and for their useful suggestions on how to improve the manuscript.

Reviewer 1:

My only suggestion for revision is that it would be preferable to list gestational age in weeks (as opposed to "months") in Table 1 if that data is available. I noted that in Table 2, the government orders list testing gestational age recommendations in terms of weeks, but that the other groups in Table 2 are not as specific (either listing months, trimesters, or no specific gestational age).

Response: Data on the women’s gestational age is only available in months. This information was obtained from their notebook or self-reported and was provided as in months, not in weeks. The government order provides recommendation for screening in terms of weeks, and since we wish to be as specific as possible, we have therefore listed this in weeks rather than in months. Although we do agree with the reviewer that it would be preferable if all information was available in terms of weeks.

Reviewer 2:
The limitations of the study are well enunciated and although the numbers of women interviewed are relatively small it would seem unlikely that expanding the study would change the essential conclusions.

Response: We very much agree with the reviewer’s comment. However, recruitment was continued until theoretical saturation was reached and we therefore do not believe that interviewing more women would have added much to the findings. We have added a sentence on this in the Methods section on page 6, line 1-2.

The reviewer was intrigued by the lack of compliance with the DIPS1 Guidelines especially in the urban centre. Was this because the full GTT was part of the development of the DIPS1 criteria? If so it would be helpful to include this as a comment.

Response: This was the standard procedure at the urban center i.e. that the women attended in the fasting state. Women who attended the urban center in the non-fasting state, however, would typically not be dismissed.