Author’s response to reviews

Title: A program to respond to otitis media in remote Australian Aboriginal communities: a qualitative investigation of parent perspectives

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Author’s response to reviews:

Paramala Santosh

Editor

BMC Pediatrics
Dear Dr Santosh,

Thank you very much for organising the reviews for our paper. All three reviewers provide detailed comments and insightful suggestions for improvement, of which we are very appreciative. Below is a summary of the main changes in the major revision we have made.

Background:
In response to the reviewers’ comments we have extensively rewritten the Background so that overall it has a more logical flow, is more focused, and is less wordy. We have taken up the specific suggestions of Reviewer 3 in particular in reorganising the information flow in the Background. We have provided more detail on the LiTTLe program within the Background as requested by reviewers. We have adjusted the aims in line with the reviewers’ feedback.

Method:
The interview development is now described in more detail. We have added the interview schedule as Appendix 1. Relatedly we have moved some methodological aspects out of the Results and into the Methods.

Recruitment is also described in more detail. The details of the interviews – when and where – is now worked in. We have also clarified that informed consent was obtained. We have explained why we opted for individual interviews rather than focus groups.

Results:
We have moved the description of the participants to the Results section as suggested by Reviewer 3, and added more details there. Age in years is not particularly salient to residents in this community or others in the region and we would have been perceived as unnecessarily intrusive and threatening had we asked each adult woman for their age. Instead we provide approximate ranges based on input from our community team members.

We have chosen not to provide more detail in association with quotes (e.g. Mother, 3 year old son) because we have committed to maintaining privacy for the community at their request. To disclose too much about individuals risks identifying them and their community, as this is an area with very small populations where families and their particulars are well known. This is
particularly important within the political climate in which we are operating and an ethical obligation.

Discussion:

We have completely rewritten the Discussion to contextualize the results and consider their implications beyond our study. We have included and discussed several more references in doing this and we hope that this section is significantly improved. We are particularly grateful for the practical suggestions that the reviewers made and we have tried to follow those.

Finally we have checked the manuscript carefully for typos and improved the formatting of the references.

Thank you for the opportunity to resubmit.

Caroline Jones