Author’s response to reviews

Title: Achieving the End Game: Employing "Vaccine Diplomacy" to Eradicate Polio in Pakistan

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Author’s response to reviews:

ALSO SUBMITTED AS FORMATTED LETTER

To: Dr. Jose Tuells, PhD, MPH, MD, Editor, BMC Public Health

Re: Revised Manuscript “Achieving the End Game: Employing "Vaccine Diplomacy" to Eradicate Polio in Pakistan”

Date: December 20, 2018

Dear Dr. Tuells:

Thank you for your email and reviewer comments for the manuscript titled “Achieving the End Game: Employing "Vaccine Diplomacy" to Eradicate Polio in Pakistan” (PUBH-D-18-02626R1). As directed by your correspondence, we are submitting a revised manuscript that addresses the specific request by editor and the minor comments from reviewers with edits highlighted in our resubmitted manuscript and as detailed in this cover letter. Our responses follow reproduced editor and reviewer comments.

Below, please find the editor and reviewer’s comments (in bold) and how each is addressed in the revised manuscript. Changes to the manuscript have focused on copyediting, reducing word count, and focusing the article. Hence, changes have not been tracked, but word count has been reduced as requested along with changes to the reference style.

We thank you for the opportunity to submit this revised manuscript and look forward to your comments.
Editor Comments:

Editor Comments: The article should be revised by adjusting the text to the characteristics of the correspondence section: https://www.biomedcentral.com/p/the-bmc-series-journals/correspondence. The number of words in the manuscript should be reduced. The bibliography needs a thorough revision.

We thank the editor for these important comments and suggestions to improve our manuscript and were pleased to see the positive comments from reviewers. Regarding the correspondence content type, we have had previous discussion with the BMC Editorial Office (Nickolas Stepney) who informed us to change the content type from a Debate piece (the manuscript was originally submitted under this content type) to a Correspondence piece, but we were also instructed that we could maintain a longer word count. Other Correspondence pieces published in the journal have also had longer word counts than what is recommended in the guide for authors. However, in recognition of the need to better focus the article, we have edited the manuscript and significantly reduced the word count as suggested (a total reduction of 1,300 words in the revised manuscript) by moving many of our recommendations into a new Table 1. We have also updated the manuscript to reflect recent decisions by WHO to continue the PHEIC status for Polio and recent developments in Pakistan polio efforts. We have also revised our entire bibliographical references section to correspond with the journal’s reference style. We believe these changes have significantly improved the manuscript and thank you for your help.

Reviewer 1 Comments:

Reviewer #1: The paper is well written and very informative. How are the authors planning to disseminate their policy recommendations?

We thank the reviewer for their helpful comments and request for further clarification regarding how we will disseminate our policy recommendations. Please see our changes below in the conclusion section based upon this suggestion:

Surrogacy is an arrangement through which a surrogate mother bears and delivers a child for another couple or person [5]. A traditional/genetic surrogacy is when a surrogate is artificially impregnated with sperm, usually from the intended parent, but may also be donor sperm, with the intention of that sperm fertilizing her (the surrogates) egg, thereby making her both the genetic and gestational mother [5]. In gestational surrogacy, embryos that are not genetically related to the surrogate are implanted into the uterus of the surrogate, who will then carry the gestation to term, the intended parent(s) being the individual(s) with ownership of the aforementioned embryos. (p4-carryover, ¶ 2-carryover)

Reviewer 2 Comments:

I have reviewed the manuscript: Achieving the End Game: Employing "Vaccine Diplomacy” to Eradicate Polio in Pakistan, which is a piece well conceived, written and analyzed. I found the
paper interesting, proposing a policy alternative to address the barriers or problems related to the Polio vaccination in Pakistan. I have not concerns about the analysis neither structural or grammatical issues.

We thank the reviewer for their positive comments and support regarding our manuscript. We feel this is an important global health issue and that the piece identifies some specific challenges that can be addressed to help finally eradicate polio. We have also updated the piece in response to recent developments by WHO and in Pakistan.

Reviewer 3 Comments:

Descriptive manuscript that analyzes and proposes the use of "Vaccination Diplomacy" as a strategy to eradicate polio in Pakistan. The approach and writing of the text are interesting, although somewhat extensive for a correspondence article. Bibliographical references do not correspond to the journal's guide, they should be revised.

We thank the reviewer for their support of our manuscript and also recognize that the language is extensive for this particular content type. In response, we have edited the manuscript to reduce word count and focus the article as detailed in our response above to the handling editor. We have also revised our entire bibliographical references section to correspond with the journal’s reference style. Thanks for your help in improving this manuscript.

We thank editors and reviewers for their helping in improving our submission.

Thank you,

Authors