Author’s response to reviews

Title: Active Women over 50: Study protocol for RCT of a low-dose information and support program to promote physical activity behaviour change

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Author’s response to reviews:

13 August, 2019

Marie-Victoire Cosson
Editorial Board
BMC Public Health

Re: Revision to Study Protocol manuscript [PUBH-D-18-03933]
Dear Marie-Victoire,

Thank you for your email on 5 August 2019 informing us on our potential acceptability for publication in BMC Public Health following some revisions of our submitted manuscript. Please find attached the revised manuscript for the Study Protocol entitled “Active Women over 50: Study protocol for RCT of a low-dose information and support program to promote physical activity behaviour change”. Please be informed the title has been amended from the original submission for clarity.

We have addressed the comments raised by Francesca Gallè (Reviewer 1) below, and changes have been made to the attached manuscript.

Comment 1: In the introduction section, the sentence reported at line 106 seems to be disconnected by the context and it anticipates what is discussed subsequently. It could be removed.
Response 1: We acknowledge the disconnection of context. The text in lines 106-110 have been deleted.

Comment 2: Furthermore, regarding the issues related to the delivery of education in primary settings, costs should be considered together with time.
Response 2: The text relating to this has been deleted.

Comment 3: Line 139: it could be better to say "based on the BCW"?
Response 3: Line 133 has been amended to “utilising the BCW”.

Comment 4: In general, how the Authors will manage the possible contamination between intervention and control group, considering that the workplaces will be the same?
Response 4: We acknowledge the risk of contamination between the intervention and control group and will randomise people known to each other to the same group (Methods, Line 182-4). We have added “if they are from the same workplace department” (Methods, Line 182-183) to help with clarity.
Comment 5: Do they think it's possible that controls will modify their habits during the three months of wait-list, beginning to increase their levels of physical activity?

Response 5: Yes, we recognise it is possible that control participants could modify their habits during the three months of wait-list. However, this is a possibility in any research study recruiting volunteers with an interest in the intervention topic.

Comment 6: Finally, it should be considered that if lack of free time is the main casual factor for inactivity in the majority of the sample, it will be difficult to achieve the expected results without offering concrete opportunities at the workplace.

Response 6: Time constraints is a recognised barrier to physical activity participation. The information session and follow-up email support will emphasise that there are different ways to include physical activity into daily life, for example with the use of active transport and the benefits of even small increases in physical activity for health and habit formation. This has now been included in the text (Methods, Line 200-203).

Kind regards,

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