Author’s response to reviews

Title: Living with type 1 diabetes is challenging for Zambian adolescents: qualitative data on stress, coping with stress and quality of care and life

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Author’s response to reviews: see over
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To the Editor,  
BMC Endocrine Disorder

Dear Editor,

Re: MS 5331777761450528 Living with type 1 diabetes is challenging for Zambian adolescents: qualitative data on stress, coping with stress and quality of care and life

We are very thankful for the thoughtful comments on the previous version of our manuscript and the opportunity to re-submit our manuscript to your esteemed journal.

Below are revisions made to the manuscript as per reviewers’ comments.

**Major Compulsory Revision**

Methods: Did data collection/analysis continue until saturation was reached; that is until no new codes or categories emerged? The logic of qualitative rests not on generalizability or representativeness, but on the notion of saturation. Thus, sample size is not a criterion for evaluating the sample strategy, but rather for evaluating the adequacy and the comprehensiveness of the study findings. The author should clarify this point in the manuscript.

Authors’ response: We were indeed able to reach interview data saturation from our adolescents’ interviews. However, because only a few guardians accompanied the adolescents during medical appointments we did not reach data saturation in the guardians; time and cost could not allow us to follow them up in their respective homes. Further, given a small number of health care
providers who routinely attend to adolescents with diabetes, we interviewed all we could identify at the time of the study. We added this missing information to the text in line 142-147.

Results: in the first three themes, stressors? Coping strategies? and ? Diabetes care and diabetes self-care? The authors included few quotations from the participants from the participants with type 1 diabetes. The second theme,? Coping strategies?, did not include any quotations from the participants with type I diabetes or caregivers and these are the individuals employing coping strategies. Further, a main discussion point in line 371-375 was that adolescents reported multiple sources of stress; however, the results for not include an adequate number of quotations from the adolescents to support these findings. Considering that this manuscript is about living with type 1 diabetes in Zambian adolescents, more quotations from the participants with type 1 diabetes are needed. If the authors are concerned about word count, additional quotations can be provided in a table.

Authors’ response: Thank you for the helpful comments we totally agree with this observation.

Under the theme we have added the following quotes:

Line 226-228; Sometimes I just ask why me? I have friends and most of them have no diabetes. But what I hate most is that I cannot take (eat) sweet things (food – authors’ insertion). And I also now wonder whether people with diabetes give birth, so I feel stressed. Female grade 10

Line 240-242; I become depressed because of injecting myself, you see I have been injecting myself for seven years on the same spot but what can I do it’s my life. Most of my stress comes from injecting myself. Female, grade 12

Line 249-250; I am stressed if the blood sugar is high I start feeling very sick and sometimes vomiting and become tired. I even get slim such that I start looking like I am HIV infected (Laughs). Female grade 10
Under the theme coping strategies we added the following quotes:

Line 281-182; I have to find what to do. Like when I am at school I have to start playing with my friends that way, I stop thinking about those things (stressors – authors’ insertion). Female, grade 11

Line 288-291; Prayers! I pray a lot. Mostly alone but sometimes with my family members. I usually go for prayers on Tuesdays, Thursdays, Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays. Male, grade 8

For me it is to pray and go to church. You see if you go to church you get a lot of encouragement and support that helps a lot to deal with her situation. Female guardian aged 30

Under the theme diabetes care we added the following quotes:

Line 317-321; sometimes you come in and you find that there is no medicine, insulin, so they can be keeping more insulin and other medication. Male patient grade 8

Monitoring of sugar is practically impossible in our environment because when you look at a glucometer it is roughly about US$ 47.60 – US$ 65 and that just a one off thing because they need also strips which are expensive roughly about US$40 for 50 strips”. Pediatrician

In addition we have provided a table with selected quotes from adolescents and guardians. However, because the document contain 5 pages of quotes it will be attached as addition document than addition table to the manuscript.

Discretionary revisions.

Line 208: the authors added percentages and count for a statement on psychological stressors; however, the percentage and count are not equal. The authors need to correct the numbers presented.
Authors’ response: we have corrected it and it now reads 36% in line 211.

Line 280: the authors added a percentage and count for a statement on quality of care; however, the denominator for the count is 12 and not 22. Are the authors referring to a subsample of the population? If yes, the authors need to state this in the sentence or correct the numbers presented to reflect the total sample.

Authors’ response: this percentage and count was referring to a subpopulation. Line 299 we added “Health care providers and guardians were the only ones who…” Adolescents did not mention the problem of non-adherence.

Line 326: this quotation is provided by a female aged 36. Is this participant a caregiver? The authors should clearly state whether the participant is a caregiver or provider?

Authors’ response: we corrected this in line 354 “guardian”.

Lines 420-423: the quotation provided in the discussion section should be moved to the results section. As stated by the reviewers, new data should not be presented in the discussion section.

Authors’ response: this quotation has be removed from discussion and added to results section in line 319-321.

*** Request for copy edit

Authors’ response: a native English speaker copy edited the manuscript

Thank you very much,

Given Hapunda