Author’s response to reviews

Title: Oral cancer screening practices of Oral Health Professionals in Australia

Authors:

Rodrigo Mariño (r.marino@unimelb.edu.au)
Satoru Haresaku (haresaku@college.fdcnet.ac.jp)
Roisin McGrath (mcgrathr@student.unimelb.edu.au)
Denise Bailey (Denise.Bailey@adc.org.au)
Michael Mccullough (m.mccullough@unimelb.edu.au)
Ross Musolino (sandalino@iinet.net.au)
Alagesan Chinnasamy (achinnasamy@student.unimelb.edu.au)
Boaz Kim (boaz.kim90@gmail.com)
Michael Morgan (m.morgan@unimelb.edu.au)

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Editorial Office

BMC Oral Health

Re OHEA-D-17-00305: “Oral cancer screening practices of Oral Health Professionals in Australia”.

Dear

Editorial Office,

Thank you for your letter dated 8th of November 2017 advising us that we could resubmit a revised manuscript. We note that the reviewers raised some helpful comments. My colleagues and I have reviewed the manuscript in view of the reviewers’ comments and have addressed them as follows:

Reviewer reports:
Michaela Goodwin, BSc, MSc, PhD (Reviewer 1):

Page 1 - Line 22 - do you mean Logistic regression rather than linear regression

Reply: Noted and modified

Page 2 - line 37 this sentence 'rise particularly in younger adults of 40s and 50s who have never smoked' could be rewritten. Also it is unusual to refer to those in their 50s as younger adults so would suggest another phrase.

Reply: Noted and modified

Page 3 line 14 - remove the word 'and' - replace 'with the'

Reply: Noted and modified

Page 11 - line 5 - why is the split here - very rarely vs. other - why not combine rarely and less than 50% - is it to mimic other studies which have shown around 85% of dentists perform oral screening (which would be a similar number here)

Reply: although not exactly the same proportion, the classification follows the logic: Very rarely (12.8%) vs. other (87.2%). Combining with those who perform oral cancer screenings in less than 50% of the patients would increase the proportion to more than 25%.

Low response rate - what was the minimum sample needed - the authors describe what was expected but not the minimum to have confidence in results.

Reply: Noted and included

Were any actions taken to increase response rate - contact dentists again, follow up with non-responders to see why etc.?

Reply: Noted and included

Is there any data to compare this group of responders to the wider dental sample i.e. do the distribution of responders represent the population in age, qualification, profession etc. There would still be non-response bias but I was wondering if the group is biased in any of the metrics that could easily be measured

Reply: Noted and included

Karla T. B. Crosara, DDS (Reviewer 2):

In the Discussion section, page 11, lines 52 to 59, the authors mentioned that their results contrast to earlier studies done in Australia and elsewhere regarding OHPs performing
comprehensive oral cancer screening with all patients. Maybe, the authors could elaborate on the reasons for such difference.

Reply: Noted and included

In addition, the authors should include a title for Table 4, and remove from Table 3 a line which repeats 'Screening examination involved:', page 26, line 15. It would also make the reader more engaged if the tables were referenced within the text as their data is reported. Only tables 1 and 2 were cited within the text.

Reply: Noted and included

Finally, a few minor typo mistakes were observed that should be considered by the authors: 1. In the background section, page 2, line 10, instead of 'have been', maybe 'has been' would be more appropriate; page 2, line 52, 'reviews' should be written without the 's'; and 2. In the Data Analysis section, page 7, line 5, 'analyses' should be written 'analysis'; also in page 7, line 22, it would be best to use 'All these 45 OHPs' than 'All this…".

Reply: Noted and modified

Thank you again for reviewing the manuscript and considering the publication of this study in the BMC Oral Health. If you have any further questions, please contact me.

Kind regards,

Prof Rodrigo Mariño