Author’s response to reviews

Title: Comparative effectiveness of school-based caries prevention: A prospective cohort study

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Author’s response to reviews:

1. Your study falls within the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE)’
definition of a clinical trial: any research study that prospectively assigns human subjects to one
or more health related interventions to evaluate the effects on health or biological outcomes. As
such, Biomed Central requires that a Trial Registration Number is provided in order for the
manuscript to be published.

If you do not feel your study falls within this definition, please provide justification as to why
not.

This study is not a clinical trial--rather, it uses data from two prospective cohorts. The
interventions were not assigned, as there was one intervention in each cohort and all consenting
participants received the provided treatment (no random or non-random assignment was made).
We believe this confusion may have stemmed from the use of "treatment" and "control" in the
narrative. In the revised manuscript we have revered these back to 'exposed' and 'unexposed'
and consistently used the language of cohorts throughout. Details of the cohort study particulars
are found in the first paragraph of methods.
2. As study participants are children (under 16 years of age), please clarify whether consent to participate was collected from the parents/guardians. If consent from guardians was obtained please provide details of how they were informed about the study and how consent was delivered to the study co-ordinators. Please include this information under the heading “Ethics approval and consent to participate”/

The information on guardian consent was included in "Ethics approval and consent to participate" section.

3. Please provide figure titles/legends under a separate heading of 'Figure Legends' after the References. Figure files should contain only the image/graphic, as well as any associated keys/annotations. If titles/legends are present within the figure files, please remove them.

This has been added, and the title has been removed from the figure itself.

4. At this stage, please upload your manuscript as a single, final, clean version that does not contain any tracked changes, comments, highlights, strikethroughs or text in different colours. All relevant tables/figures/additional files should also be clean versions. Figures (and additional files) should remain uploaded as separate files.

Our submitted revision is now free of all of the above listed information, and clean tables and the figure have been uploaded.

Thank you!