Author's response to reviews

Title: Sexual and reproductive health services for women with disability: a qualitative study with service providers in the Philippines

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Version: 3
Date: 17 August 2015

Author's response to reviews: see over
17th August 2015

Dear Professor Fisher,

RE: Resubmission of MS: 8450079181759546 - Sexual and reproductive health services for women with disability: a qualitative study with service providers in the Philippines

We thank both the reviewers for their most constructive review of this paper and for their positive and encouraging feedback. We also appreciate the comments about the importance of the topic, and very much agree.

We have made the following changes in response to reviewer McCabe’s essential revisions:

1. The research question has been more clearly articulated in the methods sections. See lines 175-178.
2. We have provided more information about the service providers who participated in the study in the methods section (see lines 191 – 199). While we are able to include the gender split of participants (which we have done), the small sample size means that further demographic description would render participants potentially identifiable. This is particularly true in Ligao City (the more rural site). We have clarified that any service provider involved in the delivery of SRH services to the public in Quezon City and Ligao City was eligible to participate in the study. Recruitment ceased when descriptive saturation was achieved.
3. We have added description of the length of the interviews and focus group discussions in lines 187-188.
4. The suggested subheading has been added (line 90).
5. The suggested correction has been made (line 218).
6. We thank reviewer McCabe for this suggestion, but would like to keep this sentence in its current position in the paper. The way the material is currently organised aims to highlight barriers to SRH that relate to service providers’ attitudes and experience, separately to more organisational and structural barriers. ‘Lack of data and information’ is tricky because it could go in either section, relating both to service providers themselves but also to the structures and systems within which they work (which are poorly funded and where health information systems totally neglect disability). Our preference is to highlight the structural nature of this problem, rather than include it in a section that is more about the service providers themselves.
7. As advised, we have kept the original title in order to comply with the journal’s requirements (though we did like the positive framing of the suggested change).
8. We have checked the manuscript to eliminate use of contractions and the passive voice.

In light of your comments to ensure that there was no repetition and reviewer Eastgate’s concern about the length of the manuscript, we have only adopted reviewer McCabe’s discretionary suggestion about recapping summaries of each section to a limited degree. We have, however, added comment about the implications of our findings for education of service providers in the Philippines (see lines 597-602).
We have made the following changes in response to reviewer Eastgate’s essential revisions:

1. We have corrected the grammatical and spelling errors identified. We have retained the term ‘intersectional’ however, as the concept of intersectionality (Crenshaw 1989) heavily informs our approach to understanding women’s experiences of intersecting axes of discrimination.

2. As advised, we have checked for repetition to ensure that the manuscript is not unduly lengthy.

3. We have clarified that descriptive saturation was achieved (lines 200-201).

We thank reviewer McCabe for her encouragement to publish a manuscript outlining the participatory processes used in W-DARE, and we fully intend to do so as we agree this would be valuable to other researchers seeking to adopt more disability inclusive research approaches.

Drawing on data generated by the W-DARE program of research as a whole (including this sub-study), we are able to explore and report on differences and similarities across the two research sites, and will seek to do so in further publications. Reviewer McCabe’s asked whether the multisited nature of the study is a strength or a limitation. It is important to note that stakeholders in the Philippines clearly view this as a strength, increasing relevance of the research findings to stakeholders across the country and elsewhere in the region.

We appreciate your consideration of our revised manuscript, and look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

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