Author’s response to reviews

Title: Using Theory-Based Messages to Motivate U.S. Pregnant Women to Prevent Cytomegalovirus Infection: Results from Formative Research

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Dear Dr. Aronin,

Thank you very much for providing us with peer feedback on the manuscript, “Using Theory-Based Messages to Motivate U.S. Pregnant Women to Prevent Cytomegalovirus Infection: Results from Formative Research” (BMWH-D-16-00052). We appreciate the opportunity to respond to the very helpful comments from our reviewers.

Yeon Choi (Reviewer 1): It would be interesting to learn how women of childbearing age who plan to get pregnant for the first time respond to the information. What about women from other ethnic background and education levels?

Author Response: Women from different ethnic and racial backgrounds were included in our research. Phase 1 includes Asian-American (28%), Black or African-American (6%), and Hispanic-Latina (9%) women (Table 4, pgs. 16-17). Phases 2 and 3 purposely oversampled Black or African-American women since the birth prevalence of CMV is higher among this group. Unfortunately, limited resources prevented us from having a representative sampling strategy. We acknowledge this in our limitations, that this sample is not generalizable to all U.S. women (Pg. 29, lines 16-17). We also call for future research to test CMV messages with women with lower levels of education (Pg. 30, lines 6-7).

Cheryl Jones (Reviewer 2):

- Page 3, lines 4: In the abstract - provide some explanation for informed non content readers about the premised underlying fear appeals theory-based messages.

Author Response: Thank you for the suggestion to define fear appeals theory in the
abstract. We have added that information because we agree that it is an important clarification for readers (Pg. 3, lines 4-5).

- Some of the methodology tables could be provided as supplemental material. 
  Author Response: It’s understandable that the reviewer may find that some of the tables have a lot of information. This could distract the reader. However, all information included in the tables is critical to understanding the methodology and findings. Therefore, we recommend keeping all tables in the main body of the article. We are also open to working with journal editors to make some of these tables expandable (via accordion link) or hyperlinked, if that is possible and would help with the overall flow of the paper.

- Some specific discussion about how the findings would inform change of the current CDC cCMV prevention strategy would be helpful.
  Author Response: This is an excellent point. We have added language to the Discussion section to address the question of how CDC could use these research findings:

"Our findings can help shape how CMV and prevention strategies ought to be promoted by practitioners, and it offers important insight to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention as it continues to review and consider its promotion of CMV prevention strategies."

(Page 28, lines 4-6)

If there is any other information that we can provide to expedite your decision, please let me know.

Thank you,

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