Author’s response to reviews

Title: Distant and proximate factors associated with maternal near-miss: A nested case-control study in selected public hospitals of Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Authors:

Ewnetu Liyew (ewnetuliyew@gmail.com)
Alemayehu Yalew (alemayehuwy@yahoo.com)
Mesganaw Afework (mesganaw.f@gmail.com)
Birgitta Essén (birgitta.essen@kjh.uu.se)

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Author’s response to reviews:

To Aimee Cummings

Managing Editor
BMC Women’s Health

Subject: Submission of the second revised version of a manuscript

Title: Distant and proximate factors associated with maternal near-miss: A nested case-control study in selected public hospitals of Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Manuscript Number: BMWH-D-17-00197R1

Dear Aimee Cummings,

Thank you for reviewing and forwarding the very valuable comments. We have considered all of the comments very carefully and have found them to be useful in enriching the manuscript. Please find below detailed point-by-point responses to the concerns you raised.
1 We note that the current submission contains some textual overlap with other previously published works, in particular:

http://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0179013

This overlap mainly exists in your -methods section

While we understand that you may wish to express some of the same ideas contained in these publications, please be aware that we cannot condone the use of text from previously published work.

Please re-phrase these sections to minimize overlap.

• Thank you so much for your comment and we have re-phrased some of the statements indicated under the method sub-section of the manuscript to minimize an overlap with our previous published work.

2 In your “ethical approval and consent to participate” section, please list the full names of each participating hospital

• Thank you, and we have now listed the name of the participating hospitals under the “Ethics approval and consent to participate” sub-section of the revised manuscript (Page 14, lines 300-302).

3 In your “ethical approval and consent to participate” section of your declarations please confirm if an ethics committee approved the procedure for verbal consent, and why they felt the need for written consent was not necessary for this study.

You state "For observational studies, taking verbal consent is the standard requirement of the Institutional Review Board of Addis Ababa University". However, we need confirmation that the ethics committee themselves wavered the need for written consent, rather than the use of implied standard requirement, and specifically stated that verbal consent was approved for this study.

• Thank you so much for your concern. However, written consent in our country context is signature of the participants, and signature may be a personal identifier. As a result, we used verbal consent in order to avoid the use of any personal identifier.

• Although the type of consent was not stated in it, we have attached you the IRB’s decision letter that was provided for our study (attached as a supplementary file on the online submission system). During our previous submission of the protocol to Addis Ababa University IRB, we have mentioned to use a verbal consent, and this decision letter has been
provided based on that. There is no room to violate the ethical standards mentioned in the protocol.

4 Please include the email addresses for all authors on the title page. The corresponding author should still be indicated.

- Thank you and we have included the e-mail address of all the authors in the title page of the revised manuscript (Page 1, lines 6-9).

5 We would also like to ask for you to provide more justification for the contributions of MFA and BE as currently they do not automatically qualify for authorship. Contribution to co-advising and reviewing of the manuscript alone, does not usually justify authorship.

- Thank you so much for your observation. The contributions of MFA and BE was wrongly stated in our previous version of the manuscript. We have now described their actual contributions in the revised version of the manuscript (Page 15, lines 317-322).