Author’s response to reviews

Title: Implementation and evaluation of nonclinical interventions for appropriate use of cesarean section in low- and middle-income countries: protocol for a multisite hybrid effectiveness-implementation type III trial

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1) At over 6000 words the manuscript is longer than our word count limit of 5500 words. The manuscript needs to be within our word count limit. We routinely encourage authors to use additional online files in order to bring the word count of the main text down.
Thank you for this reminder. We have now shortened the text to 4997 words. As you have suggested we have added two new appendices: “Extended cost-effectiveness analysis” and “Knowledge transfer strategy”.

2) Whilst this is a protocol, we would still expect to see some discussion to what this will add to the existing literature - from what's presented its not clear how this study builds on or will add to existing knowledge particularly with regard to opinion leaders and A&F.

Thank you for your comment. We added a discussion point to what the QUALI-DEC research will add to the existing literature: page 9 and 10 of the revised manuscript.

3) The interventions themselves are not sufficiently well described. We are committed to making reporting of implementation strategies clear and accessible so please amend.

Thank you for your comment. We have detailed and make the description of the intervention as clear as accessible as possible: page 4 and 5 of the revised manuscript.

4) Please ensure that you follow the quality criteria proposed by Ramsay et al (doi:10.1017/S0266462303000576) for the conduct and reporting of ITS studies to ensure that our study is adequately reported.

Thank you for your comment. Indeed, we will follow the quality criteria proposed by Ramsey et al. We have added this reference in the text and we have also made more explicit that we will follow this criteria to ensure that our study will be adequately reported: page 8 of the revised manuscript.