Author’s response to reviews

Title: Use of a Geographic Information System to create treatment groups for group-randomized community trials: The Minnesota Heart Health Program

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Response to the Editor

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Comment from the Editor

We note that you have only transposed Table 2, rather than provide a new standard table of *several* baseline characteristics, containing at least %males, %females, mean or median age, %less than high school education, %high school education, %college education and other education categories. The methods used to randomise participants included age, sex and education, so it is not surprising that these are balanced. However, it is useful to check that *other* factors were balanced between the intervention and control group. We hope that the
request to provide this is clearer. But let us know if it is not. As before, we suggest outlining this table as commonly seen in RCT publications.

Response

We are grateful to the Editor for this valuable comment, and have revised Table 2 accordingly. New variables that were not used in balancing have been added as requested. These show that the two groups are well matched in terms of the percentage of men and women, median age, several education categories, income, and marital status.

As we were reflecting on the results from our study, we decided to remove the p-values from Table 2, since we already know that any differences are caused by chance due to the randomization techniques used.

We thank the Editor for suggesting these improvements to our paper, and trust that it will now be suitable for publication in the Journal.