Author's response to reviews

Title: Theory based interventions for caries related sugar intake in adults: Systematic review

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Author’s response to reviews:

Dear Dr. Dempster,

Thank you very much for your email response and reviewers’ comments on our manuscript (PSYO-D-17-00025). We found these insightful comments very helpful in assisting us to make modifications to the manuscript. We have attached the revised paper and hope that it will now be acceptable to BMC Health Psychology. The corrections appear highlighted in green within the manuscript.

Please find below our response to both reviewers’ comments point by point:

1. In P4 L79-, it is unclear what the sentences explained. (reviewer 1)

   We have made the sentences clearer (please refer to the manuscript P4 L80-95)

2. Do they describe superiority of SCM based interventions in comparison to intervention without any "theory" or effectiveness of SCM based interventions relative to control condition? Please clarify the point. (reviewer 1)

   We describe effectiveness of SCM based interventions relative to a control condition.

3. Authors can describe advantages of theory based intervention to clarify the focus of this review. (reviewer 1)

   We describe the advantages of theory based interventions to clarify the focus of this review (please refer to the manuscript P3 L72-75)

4. Abbreviations in manuscript should be defined at their first mention (e.g., DMFT, DMFS). (reviewer 1)
We have now defined the abbreviations in manuscript at first time of use (please refer to the manuscript P5 L107-108; P6 L128-140, 143; P7 L166-167)

5. The literature search strategy for Cochrane database (P21-22) seems to have duplicates. Search results of #20 (#17-19) and #16 (#13-15) would be included in results of #4. It is better to be concise and consistent in literature search. Is there any reason for the duplicates? (reviewer 1)

In response to this very helpful comment, we have excluded any duplication of literature in our systematic review. We have made a correction to this effect P23 L540.

6. Comment: The paper is methodologically sound. I am not sure that BMC PSYCHOLOGY is an appropriate outlet for a research which addresses the interventions for caries related sugar intake. I understand that the meta-analyzed interventions are psychological, however the main aim of the meta-analysis clearly is not. (reviewer 2)

Thank you for this comment. We can see that it might not be immediately apparent how our review would fit within mainstream health psychology literature. To this end, we have modified our Introduction section extensively to make the point that the review’s main focus is on assessing the effectiveness of psychological models on health related behavioural change on reducing free-sugar intake aimed to prevent dental caries. We have also emphasised the point that psychological interventions for oral health are an under-researched area of health psychology.

We believe that these revisions have improved the manuscript substantially and we look forward to hearing from you further in due course.

Yours sincerely

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