Author’s response to reviews

Title: Parents of Healthy Children Assign Lower Quality of Life Measure to Scenarios Labeled as Cancer than to Identical Scenarios not Labeled as Cancer

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Response to Review
1/28/18

Ajay Risal:

Authors have adequately addressed the reviewer's comments. It can now be accepted for publication.

Justin Newton Scanlan:

1. Thank you to the authors for their detailed response to my initial suggestions and recommendations. My largest remaining suggestion is that I think the discussion still needs a bit more work to make it more clear what the main "take home" message from this study is. It is quite close, but I think a little more refinement would add value to the paper and make the message clearer for the reader.

   a. I have gone through the discussion and clarified wording throughout each paragraph to focus on the notion that the general public may have a misguided perception of what childhood cancer involves and this could influence decision making when a risk of cancer is present. I have added summary sentences to the ends of the 1st, 2nd and 4th paragraphs (page 11, lines 12-15 and lines 24-28, page 12 lines 51-52) to make every paragraph circle back to the main point. The conclusion is also reworded to better focus on the main point, particularly on page 13 lines 3-4.
2. Other, minor issues Page 8, line 26: I would suggest spelling out the word "percentile" rather than presenting it as %tile.
   
a. I agree, there is no need to shorten the word to a symbol and have made the suggested word change.

3. In the results section, I would recommend that the abbreviation "interquartile (IQ) range" / "IQ range" be updated to "interquartile range (IQR)" and "IQR". This will avoid confusion with intelligence quotient and will also be more consistent with the way in which interquartile range is typically presented.
   
a. I agree and have made the suggested abbreviation change throughout the paper.

4. There appears to be an incomplete revision on page 11, line 51: "The literature shows higher health utilities in childhood acute lymphoblastic leukemia (ALL) (0.74- 0.88 depending on stage of treatment, 0.88, etc.), the most studied of the childhood cancers, than the general childhood cancer health utility values we generated." Please revise for better clarity and remove the "0.88 etc"
   
a. I agree that “0.88, etc.” should be removed. I originally was listing the results of the two major studies I cited but that does not read well.

5. End of Ethics Approval and Consent to participate statement (page 14): "Informed consent was obtained from every participant with both a written explanation to read and verbal explanation per the researchers. Consent explained the purpose of the study, what the study entailed, benefits, risks, ability to withdraw without penalization, and voluntary nature of the study." It would be good to include whether consent was verbal or written and also the final sentence needs revision. A suggested rewording of this statement (assuming the details are correct) could be "Written, informed consent was provided by every participant. Information about the study was provided by a written information statement and via verbal explanation. Consent forms included details of the purpose of the study, what the study entailed, benefits, risks, ability to withdraw without penalization, and voluntary nature of the study."
   
a. I agree and have made the suggested correction, as it reads clearly. Verbal, informed consent was provided by the participants and is written as such in the Ethics approval and consent to participate section.