Author's response to reviews

Title: Development of a theory-based, peer support intervention to promote weight loss among Latina immigrants

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Author's response to reviews: see over
The authors would like to thank the reviewers for their comments and suggestions regarding our manuscript. Please see reviewer comments followed by response per item in italics below. Note edits to the manuscript are underlined along with line numbers provided below.

Reviewer 1:
1. From the focus groups there was mention of the need for ‘buy in’ from the spouse and family involvement but I cannot see in Table 1 any strategies that addressed these recommendations. Please include an explanation in the discussion section about how this was facilitated or reasons why it was not addressed.

In response to women’s need for buy-in, we included an orientation at the beginning of the intervention as well as a graduation ceremony where we encouraged and welcomed the participants’ families to attend. At the orientation, the promotora led small and large group discussion focused on identification of personal and family-level values related to health. This strategy was outlined in a previous manuscript describing our focus group results (Agne et al. Cultural Context of Obesity). We have included a brief description of this strategy along with the citation. (see lines 194-197)

2. In the discussion need to include a discussion on the weight regain at follow-up with implications for future interventions and for program sustainability. Also include a discussion on the differences between results obtained with the more subjective method (self-report) of collecting PA data compared to the more objective measure (accelerometry).

Regarding weight-regain at 6 months, we have included a discussion of this point within our limitations section and have also put in the context of current literature regarding the need for maintenance sessions in order to promote sustained weight loss (added 2 new citations, Perri et al. & Wadden et al.). (see lines 376-381)

Regarding the discrepancy between self-reported physical activity and objective measure by accelerometry, this is actually the topic of another manuscript that we have under review that looks only at baseline data from the study. We therefore have not included much discussion around this topic as it would overlap with our other manuscript. We have mentioned the discrepancy and will add a citation directing the reader to the other manuscript when one becomes available (the manuscript has been revised, resubmitted, and is currently under review). (See lines 320-325)

3. Line 124 - Need to include a brief definition of promotora so that readers understand where the intervention is situated

This has been added along with two new citations, Elder et al. and Ayala et al. 2010. (see lines 129-132)
4. Line 149 - Use Alabama here as you abbreviate it in the next sentence.

*This item has been corrected. Thank you for catching this error.*

5. Line 153 - Include current proportion of Latino population in Alabama and in Birmingham.

*Sentence was amended.*


*Done*

7. Lines 209 – 214 - Change this section to past tense.

*Done*

8. Line – 228 Should be either participant's or heights, weights etc.

*Done*

9. Line 241 - were instead of was

*Done*

10. Line 242 - Need more explanation to clarify what the DBSS measures; is it behaviors that can then have the fat and fiber intake extrapolated from the responses?

*We have added additional information. (see lines 253-258)*

11. Line 248-249 - Change this sentence to read... Physical activity was measured in two ways.

*Done*

Reviewer 2:
1. 6 month follow-up data should be mentioned in the abstract

*Done*

2. Promotora needs to be defined (community health worker) for international readers

*Done (see reviewer 1, comment 3)*

3. Rationale for developing a new intervention needs to be strengthened
We have added rationale, including a recent literature review describing the state of the science with regard to weight loss interventions in Latino communities. (see lines 121-124)

4. Given this is a pilot study more information should provided on protocols for the main study and how the pilot informed these protocols.

We are currently seeking funding for the main study and thus it is not yet underway. We have however made recommendations on how the findings in our pilot study can be used to inform our own future study and those of other investigators. (see lines 389-393)