Author’s response to reviews

Title: The ReSiT Study (Reducing Sitting Time): Rationale and protocol for an exploratory pilot study of an intervention to reduce sitting time among office workers

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Author’s response to reviews:

Dear Editor,

Thank you for the opportunity to resubmit our manuscript, which reports the rationale for a new behaviour change intervention aimed at reducing workplace sitting time, and a protocol for a pilot study to examine the acceptability of components of this intervention.

In your decision letter, and a subsequent clarifying email, you requested that we better describe the process by which the intervention has been developed, in light of the recent Thematic Series on intervention development published in PAFS. We read this work with great interest. While our manuscript is not intended as a paper that primarily describes how our intervention was developed, we have nonetheless added a section explicitly describing our development process (lines 139-156). As we now state on lines 142-147, the intervention has to date been developed via literature review. We did not engage our target population (office workers) in generating intervention ideas, prior to the piloting of our intervention prototype, because several studies have already done this (see lines 446-448). (We have incorporated many of these ideas into our
intervention.) Instead, office workers’ needs and preferences will be fed into the development process via the results of the pilot study we describe in this manuscript.

You also suggested that “slicing the original trial to describe specifically the acceptability of the intervention seems inadequate.” We hope that, by describing where the current work sits within the overarching intervention development process (lines 154-156), we have assured you that our paper does not selectively report the acceptability component of a broader trial, but rather that the pilot study focuses solely on acceptability. The paper provides an exhaustive description of the pilot study, both in terms of procedures and outcomes of interest.

The trial is part of a body of intervention development research funded by the UK Medical Research Council (MRC). The trial is ongoing; we are recruiting participants at present. It is ISRCTN-registered, and has received full institutional ethical approval. We enclose, as appendices: the Case for Support (which describes the study [aka ‘WP3’]), which was approved for funding by the MRC; evidence of funding from the MRC; and an ethics committee approval letter.

This work has not previously been published. The manuscript conforms to CONSORT and TIDIER guidelines (checklists attached as additional files, not for publication). We are happy to allow anybody to review our study materials on request.

Note that, as I was responsible for amending the manuscript, we have modified the author order. I am now first author, and Stephen Dewitt (previous first-author) is now second author. The senior author on the project is Louise Mansfield (now last author).

We look forward to receiving further feedback on our work.

Yours sincerely,
Benjamin Gardner

With and on behalf of all authors