Author’s response to reviews

Title: Improving bereavement outcomes in Zimbabwe: protocol for a feasibility cluster trial of the 9-cell Bereavement Tool

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Author’s response to reviews:
1 April 2019
Dear Editor,

Revised Manuscript ID PAFS-D-18-00211 (Version 3)
Improving bereavement outcomes in Zimbabwe: protocol for a feasibility cluster trial of the 9-cell Bereavement Tool

Thank you for giving us the opportunity to revise our manuscript in response to the reviewers’ helpful and constructive comments. Our responses are provided in the table below.

All authors have seen and approved the revised manuscript.
Please contact me if you require any further information.
Thank you for your consideration.
Reviewer 2 Comments

Thanks for submitting a revised manuscript. I would just like to draw your attention to a paper by Eldridge et al., 2015 in Statistical Methods in Medical Research titled "How big should the pilot study for my cluster randomised trial be?". They conclude that pilot trials for cluster RCTs are usually too small to estimate the ICC. I would question how you can estimate the ICC for your outcome with only two clusters. Please have a look at the article I mention and consider removing this aspect of your protocol, or caveating it in the discussion.

Authors’ Responses

Thank you for drawing this helpful paper to our attention (Elrige 2016). We agree with their conclusions and have removed mention of ICC calculation from our manuscript.

We had included, in the original Manuscript, the following 2 sentences in Line 462 to 462 on Page 21:

‘In addition, we will determine the ICC for the two clusters to inform full trial sample size calculations. The ICC will be estimated from each cluster on baseline data for each outcome measure’.

We have removed the 2 sentences completely.