Author’s response to reviews

Title: Pilot Test of an Educational Intervention to Improve Self-management of Diabetes in Persons Living with HIV

Authors:

Julie Zuniga (jzuniga@nursing.utexas.edu)
Alexandra Garcia (agarcia@mail.nur.utexas.edu)
Luisa Silva (soyguicha@gmail.com)
Jungmin Park (jungminpark@utexas.edu)
Yuri Barrera (yuribarrera@utexas.edu)

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We appreciate your time and effort to review this manuscript. We addressed the issues brought up by the reviewers. The changes make for a stronger manuscript.

Reviewer #1:

1. A few more minor changes to make, mostly regarding typing errors; Page 8 line 10 - sentence doesn't make sense. Typo?
   Revised sentence

2. Page 14 line 10 - typo in sentence. I think you mean 'long waiting times'
   Revised sentence

3. Page 16 line 7 - word missing.
   Added missing words
4. Line 8 'future studies could exclude…' should be a separate sentence.
Made it a separate sentence

5. Line 18 not sure about this sentence. Are you sure a sufficiently powered sample size is there to obtain a difference? Isn't sufficient power more about helping increase the probability to make a correct decision regarding the null hypothesis e.g. detecting differences that truly exist… revise this sentence
We revised this sentence.

Reviewer #2:
Main comments

1. The authors have provided some further information to help the reader understand why various outcomes were assessed. However, a complete list of study objectives is needed (just before the methods section) as per CONSORT guidance. Item 2b of this CONSORT publication provides some illustrative examples (available via this link https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/?term=PMC5076380). This then would help set up the methods and, subsequently, the results and discussion.

The aims on their own are not sufficient, for example, it's not clear from the aims why blood tests would be needed. I don't feel that I can fully judge the study quality in the absence of such objectives.

Revised the aims to match the CONSORT 2b example.
We added aims to the section above the methods. The discussion is now reorganized to match the objectives.

2. I don't understand the new text to justify sample size (p6, line 20). Item 7a on this CONSORT document gives some illustrative examples of justification for sample sizes in feasibility / pilot studies. https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/?term=PMC5076380.
We added more justification of sample size.
3. Reading this for the second time, I wasn't quite sure I understood the argument that the Diabetes Knowledge Test may be a poor fit for this study sample.

We updated the paragraph

4. New text in the abstract (page 2 lines 16 to 19) seems to imply the intention is to change the intervention and then introduce it into clinical practice, whereas the 'next steps' section indicates the intention is to change the intervention and then test it in a fully powered trial.

Updated to match the next step section.

5. I am not familiar with word count analysis (new text, p6, line 17). A little more detail may help. Is it a technique used within thematic analysis once the data have been coded?

Added more information about content analysis.

6. Data on the reliability of the questionnaire when used in this study sample (p9 line 2): it's not immediately clear what type of reliability was assessed. I initially wondered if it was inter-reliability or intra-reliability and was looking for a related methods section.

Added internal consistency to clarify.

7. The cash incentive would seem to be part of the intervention. Suggest include it in the description of the intervention on page 10

Added to the description of the intervention.