Author’s response to reviews

Title: Measuring the Data Gap: Inclusion of Sex and Gender Reporting in Diabetes Research

Authors:

Suzanne Day (suzanne.day@med.unc.edu)
Wei Wu (wei.wu@wchospital.ca)
Robin Mason (robin.mason@wchospital.ca)
Paula Rochon (paula.rochon@wchospital.ca)

Version: 1 Date: 20 Mar 2019

Author’s response to reviews:

Dear Research Integrity and Peer Review Editors,

Thank you for the helpful comments on our manuscript, “Measuring the data gap: inclusion of sex and gender reporting in diabetes research” (RIPR-D-18-00026). We have used the comments to strengthen and clarify the manuscript. Please find below our point-by-point responses to the reviewers’ comments. We have enclosed a tracked-changes revision of the manuscript.

Sincerely,

Suzanne Day on behalf of the authors

REVIEWER #1

1. Comment: A comment about limitations of findings due to number of excluded publications was not included.

Response: This is an excellent point; we have revised the limitations section to include a statement about the impact of our exclusion criteria on the generalizability of the findings. Please see lines 371-374 on page 16.

2. Comment: Employing funding agencies as the source of citations for the definitions of sex and gender would be less preferred than citing original publications and sources. The definition of gender in particular varies and is characterized in multiple ways in various contexts.
Response: We agree that more references would be preferable, and have added text and citations to note that our definitions distinguishing between the two terms are based on the recommended terminology for reporting on sex and gender as outlined in the SAGER guidelines as well as additional original publications. Please see lines 158-159 on page 7.

3. Comment: A comment on the nature of the sex/gender relevant findings that were reported by the few publications that did report could emphasize the importance of the issue of under-reporting being raised here. Providing such examples of sex and gender-relevant findings represents new knowledge and would serve to amplify the reports of the publications and authors who did report sex and/or gender relevant results.

Response: Thank you for this suggestion, we agree that it would help to add both new knowledge and interest to the paper. We have added new text in the discussion section to comment on the findings of the publications that separately reported their findings by sex/gender, and have provided examples that help to emphasize the importance of being able to detect sex/gender differences (or a lack thereof). Please see lines 289-306 on page 13.

REVIEWER #2

1. Comment: While not necessary, the article could be strengthened by incorporating funding sources (NIH, CIHR, industry, or other) to identify disparities in reporting based on funding source.

Response: We thank the reviewer for this suggestion, and agree that it could indeed be an interesting analysis. However, as the aim of our paper is to assess the state of sex and gender reporting in diabetes literature, conducting an additional analysis of reporting by funding may detract from our overall framing of the issue. While we have not incorporated this analysis in the current study, we will keep this suggestion in mind for future work exploring the integration of sex and gender in health research more broadly.