

## Reviewer's report

**Title:** Scoliosis Treatment Using a Combination of Manipulative and Rehabilitative Therapy: A Retrospective Case Series

**Version:** 1 **Date:** 21 June 2004

**Reviewer:** Paul Iaizzo

### Reviewer's report:

General

This "pilot" study should be of interest to those working in this area.

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Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached).

It is not clear whom, and or if multiple "blinded" experts performed the Cobb angle analyses. In fact, to add confidence to the described results, the use of multiple experts not affiliated with patient's treatments would be important. The quality of Figure 5 needs improvement: specifically to label each radiograph the same for each patient and verify Cobb analyses. For example in lower-left set, it is not convincing that the vertebrae were marked correctly.

Table 1 should be expanded to include more demographic information for each subject. It would also be nice to know, extent and types of treatments, compliance, etc.

The reference cited should be reduced to include only essential publications, i.e., by 50%.

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Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct).

Abstract: Improve wording in methods section: e.g., 22 subjects were randomly selected to participate, of these 19 met the study criterion required for analyses of treatment benefits. Results: 17 degree (62% ) improvement seems too good to be true, thus need to have multiple experts blindly examine Cobb angles.

Results: It would also be of interest to determine if there were other benefits to therapy: e.g., range of motion or other qualitative observations.

Discussion: A paragraph describing limitation of the present "pilot" study would be useful, as well as discussion of the next planned studies.

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Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

Were there sub-groups that could be identified relative to therapeutic outcomes?

**What next?:** Accept after minor essential revisions

**Level of interest:** An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

**Statistical review:** No

**Declaration of competing interests:**

None