Reviewer's report

Title: Factors associated with patients self-reported adherence to prescribed physical activity in routine primary health care

Version: 2 Date: 23 April 2010

Reviewer: Sally Rose

Reviewer's report:

The authors have responded to most of the reviewers comments reasonably well. However there are still several points that I believe need clarifying before the paper is suitable for publication. I have detailed my outstanding concerns below.

>> RESEARCH QUESTION well defined?

Major Compulsory Revisions

1. The authors have still not made a strong case for the value of adherence to a specific prescribed form of activity vs achieving an increase in any form of physical activity. At the very least I think a comment needs to be made in the discussion to acknowledge that the group who became physically active in an activity other than that prescribed is missed when assessing ‘adherence’, but that an increase in activity per se is an important outcome. Perhaps adherence to a non-prescribed activity suggests that the PAR was not well tailored to the individual in the first place?

>> Method

Major Compulsory Revisions

2. The authors have responded to my question about recommendations on the frequency, duration and intensity of activity in a PAR in the cover letter. I think mention should be made in the discussion that frequency, duration and intensity of activity were included on the PAR but not often used, with a suggested explanation as to why this might be.

The authors noted that those already doing PA on 5-7 days were also prescribed PAR for reasons such as ‘need of more activity or a more intensive activity or different kind of activity.’ It therefore seems unusual that frequency, intensity and duration were not commonly addressed.

Minor Essential Revisions

3. Re. Reference 8 is in Swedish and not accessible by general audience so should be replaced by another reference or the key content described in the text. I don't understand the authors response to this point – no other ‘complementary’ reference seems to accompany Ref 8?
Acknowledgement of work upon which they are building
A reference to other relevant work by the authors has been added (ref 9) – thank you.

Major Compulsory Revisions
4. Although referenced in several places in the present paper, the authors have not explicitly stated that data from the same study period - physical activity levels among this same group of individuals - have been reported elsewhere, and that the current data offer another means of assessing the outcomes of PAR administered in primary care. In the interest of transparency I believe the authors need to state (up front – in the introduction) that the present data was collected at the same time as data on physical activity levels among those receiving PAR (ref 1).

5. Page 14 – ‘There was a strong correlation between adherence and increased physical activity Level’ this needs to be referenced ie Ref [1] It wouldn’t hurt to present the actual % of those meeting PA targets when discussing the correlation between adherence and PA in this paragraph.

>> Editing
Minor essential revision
6. Page 8 – remove comma before reference 1

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

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

Declaration of competing interests:
I declare that I have no competing interests