Reviewer's report

**Title:** Effects of a general practice guided web-based weight reduction program - results of a cluster-randomized controlled trial

**Version:** 3  **Date:** 14 October 2012

**Reviewer:** Joseph Azuri

**Reviewer's report:**

This manuscript shows the advantages of web based interventions to support lifestyle changes. It addresses a common problem in GP practice – weight reduction.

A few points to emphasize which I suggest the authors to further discuss–

1. The study actually tested the benefits of the web-based program + SMS + telephone reminders by the GP or a qualified practice nurse. It is well known that the GP’s influence is remarkable and it is hard to differentiate the benefits of the web based program from the GP telephone calls. Bennett et al (ref 19) included a dietician consultation, while others did not include any further consultations. Is it possible to check the differences (within the intervention group) of patients who were contacted by the physician vs the nurse?

2. A possible reason for the high drop-out in the intervention group (109-76) vs the control group (77-72) may be the 10euro compensation that were given to patients in the control group to encourage them to come to the follow-up visit. Nevertheless, the conclusions did not change even through an intention to treat analysis.

3. I see the statistically significant age difference between the intervention and control groups as very important (46.5+-10.9 vs 50.9+-15.3yrs respectively). It is questionable if similar results would have been if the patients in the intervention group were older.

**Level of interest:** An article of importance in its field

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

**Statistical review:** Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests.