Reviewer's report

Title: Family practice nurses supporting self-management in older patients with osteoarthritis: a randomized trial

Version: 1 Date: 4 October 2007

Reviewer: J.J. J Rasker

Reviewer's report:

General
Interesting study giving an answer to some important questions; It could be expected that the effect would not be great of such a measure, when even the effect of a self management course is only minor. But as many rheumatology nurses are practicing this way, it is good to prove that this method has no effect and efforts should be made to find better ways to approach and treat the patients as a nurse.

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

page 5 last lines: how does the OA of hip and knee definition in this paper comply with the ACR criteria of OA? If pain was the only criterion this could explain the low effect of the treatment, as pain has many other factors like anxiety and depression that play a role, and the whole AIMS-2 should have been applied and a different approach. Why were the OA cases that were referred excluded? this gives a strong selection for milder cases.

How was the grading of the OA? Were X-rays performed in all cases?

Page 7 Which function scales of the AIMS were applied? Only the lower limb questions? ( as suggested in the power calculation)

why was no intention to treat analysis done? This is especially important on page 11 first paragraph last three lines; if one compares the medication of 51 patients, one should do this with the same 51 after 6 months. An alternative could be to compare the findings of the 40 who finished the study with their intake at the start of the study.

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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)

Page j 7 lines from below: What exactly was done in this telephone call after three months? Was it a stimulating phone call? intervention? what do the authors mean with "in which the change in life style was effective"?"
Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

**What next?:** Unable to decide on acceptance or rejection until the authors have responded to the major compulsory revisions

**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