Reviewer's report

Title: Assessment of fall-related self-efficacy and activity avoidance in people with Parkinson's disease

Version: 2 Date: 16 August 2010

Reviewer: Alice Nieuwboer

Reviewer's report:

Authors' reply:
This is clarified on page 7 (Procedure), and on page 10 (Results):
Page 7: “When completing the questionnaires, the participants also rated their present mobility as either “good (i.e. on)”, “good but hyperkinetic” or “bad (i.e. off)”.
Page 7: “The participants of the outpatient sample were also assessed clinically. Assessments were scheduled at a time point when they regularly felt at their best.”
Page 10: “At time 1, 64 out of 79 (81%) participants were in the on condition when completing the questionnaires, i.e. mobility was good or good but hyperkinetic. Fourteen rated their mobility as bad. One had missing data.”

I find this response not accurate. The authors may wish to clarify that patients responded while feeling that their mobility was good, good but hyperkinetic or bad, but we are unsure whether this equals “on” or “off”. Therefore, I would not add “(i.e. on)” or “(i.e. off)”, possibly adding a sentence that this remains uncertain.

Authors' reply:
We have now added brief comments regarding this (as well as regarding reliability) to the manuscript. A new paragraph has been inserted (Background) on page 5.
“This is unfortunate since traditional indices of such properties (e.g. scaling assumptions, reliability and validity) are sample dependent. A reliable score contains little measurement error and is reproducible. This can be assessed in various ways, of which Cronbachs alpha and test-retest reliability are the most common (Ref). Construct validity
relates to the extent an instrument produces scores that are representative of the variable it is intended to represent. It includes convergent validity and divergent validity, which can be assessed by examining the pattern of correlations with other variables. It also includes whether scores distinguish between groups that are expected to differ in relation to the investigated construct (Ref)."

This revised paragraph gives a general description of validity. But which aspects were addressed by this study? No clear link is made with the objectives of the current study.