Reviewer's report

Title: Is the Nintendo Wii Fit really acceptable to older people?: A discrete choice experiment

Version: 1 Date: 17 June 2011

Reviewer: Lee Graves

Reviewer's report:

This study aims to determine the acceptability of the Nintendo Wii Fit as a therapy tool for older people, utilising discrete choice experiment. It clearly documents the gap in literature that there have been few studies to assess the Wii’s effectiveness with older people. The study is well-written; however I have concerns regarding the methodology that need to be addressed prior to acceptance for publication.

Major compulsory revisions

1. Methods, Administering the questionnaire: The authors must state how many participants took part in the study.

2. Methods, Administering the questionnaire: Participants were included in the study if they had a Mini Mental State Examination (MMSE) score of 21/30 or greater. First, the authors need to inform the reader what level of cognitive impairment this relates too. From my understanding this score relates to mild cognitive impairment. Consequently, the authors need to comment on how the cognitive state of participants may affect the results. Discussion statements in the paper refer generically to older populations, which needs to be corrected as these findings are only generalisable to the specific population recruited and not all older people.

3. Method, Administering the questionnaire: More information is required for the Wii and conventional therapies. This includes:

   a) The prescription of the Nintendo Wii Fit – what games were played, were they played alone or in a social context with other participants, were participants allowed to choose what games they played – if not the authors need to comment on how this may affect the findings.

   b) Were participants familiarised to the Nintendo Wii? If not this may affect ability to play and hence enjoyment/preference.

   c) How long did participants stay at the rehabilitation unit? Stay duration may affect the findings and this should be explored statistically if possible and certainly commented upon in the manuscript.

   d) What did the conventional therapy consist of (i.e. type, frequency, intensity, duration, setting)?
4. Results, final paragraph: The paper states that the interviewer reported that participants stated conventional therapy was more effective than Wii Fit therapy. This statement is powerful but not supported by direct quotations from participants. The authors should add these to strengthen the paper. It would also be hugely informative to find out why the participants thought this was the case. This is the key information that will help practitioners to tailor future rehab programmes.

5. Results: Table 3 should include the statistics for the characteristics of Conventional therapy, No cost and Easy level of difficulty to improve the readers understanding of the paper.

Minor compulsory revisions

1. Discussion, paragraph 2: It would be informative for the authors to suggest areas for future research. An area I believe needs to be of priority is to consult the elderly to ask if they actually want innovative rehabilitation therapies that use active video games. This simple-to-obtain-feedback can save a great deal of time and money otherwise spent on interventions that the participant does not want to receive.

2. Background: After discrete choice experiment is first stated and abbreviated to DCE, only DCE should be used throughout the rest of the paper.

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

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.