Reviewer's report

Title: Study protocol: a randomised controlled trial of the effects of a multi-modal exercise program on cognition and physical functioning in older women

Version: 2 Date: 11 July 2012

Reviewer: Ian Cameron

Reviewer's report:

This is a potentially important and well designed study.

Major issues


A significant methodological issue is whether to provide a control intervention matched for duration of contact (rather than a wait list control). The authors should provide a justification for not doing this.

Minor issues:

1. The investigators should consider a power calculation based on a smaller effect size. The inflation factor for loss to follow-up appears appropriate.
2. Justification should be provided to indicate that BDNF is likely to be sufficiently responsive to the intervention.
3. The Short Physical Performance Battery (SPPB) could be considered as outcome measure. The TUG is unlikely to be sufficiently responsive in the population to be studied.
4. Have the investigators considered monitoring the fidelity of the intervention?
5. How will adherence be monitored?
6. Have the investigators considered a health economic analysis of the intervention?

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.