Reviewer's report

Title: How are falls and fear of falling associated with objectively measured physical activity in a cohort of community-dwelling older men?

Version: 2 Date: 14 July 2014

Reviewer: Nancye May Peel

Reviewer's report:

- Major Compulsory Revisions

1. Line 205: “Neither PA levels 10 years earlier nor social class were related to falls history.”

Table 1 indicates that the relationship between falls history and manual social class was significant (p=0.002).

Conversely, Line 224 indicates that FOF was related to manual social class even though the p value was non-significant (0.074).

Could the authors please explain why these statements are contrary to the results in Table 1?

Minor Essential Revisions

1. Line 269: “The deficits in in total volume......”

Delete second “in”

Discretionary Revisions

1. Line 88: “Falls are very common in community-dwelling older adults; approximately one third reporting falling in the past 12 months”

Findings in this study indicate that the fall rate was 20% (line 249), even though the mean age of the cohort was 78 years. The authors further state that this prevalence rate was similar to other studies (line 253). This is debatable since the cited studies (Gill et al, 2008; Tinetti & Williams, 1998; Mendes da Costa et al 2012) found annual falls rates between 30-50% . Zijlstra et al, 2007 and Bruce et al, 2002 quoted fall rates over 6 months and 3 months respectively, making comparison of prevalence rates with the current study more difficult.

The authors should give an explanation as to why their fall rate was low in comparison to the cited studies.
2. Line 91: “Fallers have lower levels of self-reported PA [7,8].”

The references quoted (Gill et al, 2008; Tinetti & Williams, 1998) examined associations between level of PA and fallers with injury. Gill et al also showed that Injurious falls are associated with lower household but higher recreational PA in community-dwelling older males; the latter finding is contrary to the authors’ statement in Line 91.

3. Line 254: “FOF was less prevalent than in some other studies”

This statement is in agreement with cited studies, except that reference 15 (Scheffer et al, 2008) was a systematic review where the reported prevalence of FOF varied between 3 and 85%. Probably this is not an appropriate article to support the authors’ statement in line 254.

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

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

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

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests