Reviewer's report

Title: The efficacy of the COACH prompting system to assist older adults with dementia through activities of daily living: An intervention study

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Reviewer: Christopher Michael Callahan

Reviewer's report:

This is a very creative, innovative, and technically savvy approach to a common problem and a highly significant problem. This is a difficult intervention to study and a difficult population to study. However, the authors have primarily demonstrated feasibility rather than efficacy or effectiveness and the paper should be refocused to discuss the feasibility of their intervention in support of a larger and more definitive clinical trial.

Major compulsory revisions - The manuscript is too long and draws too many conclusions about the efficacy of the intervention based on this small convenience sample. Much of the introduction about the prevalence of dementia and the importance of independence could be shortened to a paragraph and highlight the prior work on technology instead.

Minor essential revisions

More needs to be said about the limitations of a convenience sample of participants, the lack of blinding in the outcome assessment, and the marginal kappa’s for inter-rater reliability. The cross-over design is appropriate but in the larger trial the sequence should vary. Focus more on what you learned from the pilot feasibility study that could inform the more definitive trial, including estimation of effect sizes that could inform sample size or changes in outcome assessment.

Level of interest: An article of limited interest

Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being published

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

Declaration of competing interests:

'I declare that I have no competing interests'