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

Version: 1 Date: 27 June 2008

Reviewer: Claude Vincent

Reviewer’s report:

- Major Compulsory Revisions

This paper is very strong regarding the methods, statistical analysis and discussion for each case. Congratulations for that. I suggest only one revision, but I do not consider it as a “major compulsory revision”. I think it is important to explain the rate of participation in this kind of design.

1. How many participants were recruited initially to achieve the project with 6 participants? What happen with participants S2 and S7? Did they abandon the project before 8 weeks and if so, what was the reason? Did they die or move to another place or they were too sick? Were they man or female? What were their MMSE at the study start? Please, document this aspect for initial participants and comment it, in the discussion section. I suggest to add those information in Table 3, for the demographics.

- Minor Essential Revisions

1. Figures 1 to 7 : Add labels/titles under the figures.
2. Figures 4, 5 and 6 : under A1, B1, and so on, write “with COACH”, without COACH”.
3. Figure 3, Tables 4 and 7. Avoid abbreviation in the figure or make a legend : FAS should be written all long.
4. Table 5 : Indicate the score (out of 5) like you did in Table 4.
5. Table 8: from the title, put an *, cut “Hits, misses, false… in Table2” and paste it as a note under the table.
6. page 10, line 7, what AI means? Do you mean “AD” ?
7. page 20, 2nd paragraph, line 4, correct: S8’s number
8. page 22, 1st paragraph. I don’t understand this conclusion, it seems paradoxal for me: Therefore, while use of COACH would eliminate the need for a caregiver, it can potentially augment the burden of constant supervision f their loved one, allowing more free time for the caregiver and more privacy for the person with dementia, which in turn will hopefully improve quality of life for the dyad and delay long-term care placement.

- Discretionary Revisions
These are recommendations for improvement which the author can choose to ignore. For example clarifications, data that would be useful but not essential.

9. page 28, last paragraph: “… that participant responsiveness is dependant on several traits of the particular individual, such as cognitive abilities, hearing, vision, mood, compliance, and general attitudes.”. This is very interesting. Would you suggest those variables as criteria for delivery or not) COACH ? If so, how should we document “mood, compliance, and general attitudes”?

Please note that both the comments entered here and answers to the questions below constitute the report, bearing your name, that will be forwarded to the authors and published on the site if the article is accepted.

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

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

**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’