Reviewer’s report

Title: Effectiveness of functional splinting and the Cognitive Orientation to Occupational Performance (CO-OP) approach in children with Cerebral Palsy and Brain Injury: Two randomised controlled trial protocols

Version: 2 Date: 16 May 2014

Reviewer: Leanne Sakzewski

Reviewer’s report:

This paper outlines the study protocol of two parallel randomized trials which aim to determine the immediate effect of functional hand splints (RCT1) and the effect of functional hand splints used with a Cognitive Orientation to Occupational Performance approach (RCT2). This is an extremely well written literary piece. There are a few minor points for clarification.

1. Inclusion criteria: Further detail around inclusion/exclusion criteria for children with brain injury is warranted. It would be important to clarify how long post brain injury these children are as presumably if they have acquired an injury and are less that 12 months post insult, their status may not be stable. This would be a potential confound. Also, many children who acquire a brain injury during childhood may have good resolution of physical function, but residual cognitive/behavioural difficulties alone. Presumably children with brain injury included in this study would present with some degree of upper limb impairment. This would need to be stated in the inclusion criteria.

Minor typographical/editorial points

Background: page 1, paragraph 1. Please support statement "... task-specific training to improve hand function is well supported....) with reference please.

Page 1, please review whether international classification of functioning should be capitalized.

Page 4. There is no referencing supporting statements made in the paragraph "Functional hand splints combined with task-specific training.

Page 4: COPM, GAS and MACS are abbreviated and have not been spelt out in full prior to this.

Box and Blocks Test: please review whether this assessment title should be capitalized throughout the paper.

Could the authors please comment on the potential practice effect of doing the repeated Blocks and Box Test within 1 hour of each other.

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.