Reviewer’s report

Title: Detecting the neuropathic pain component in the clinical setting: A study protocol for validation of screening instruments for the presence of a neuropathic pain component

Version: 1 Date: 28 June 2013

Reviewer: Daniel Ciampi de Andrade

Reviewer’s report:

This is a very well designed study intended to detect neuropathic pain components in prevalent pain syndromes such as LBP and NSP. I believe the authors should separate two main objectives: one is to validate the screening tools (DN4 and PDQ) which were already translated into Dutch. Here, the gold standard must be the current IAPS criteria.

A second aim of the study would be to validate these two tools to detect neuropathic pain component, which is a clinical entity still ill understood and poorly studied.

A it is, there is some circularity, since neuropathic components stem from neuropathic pain, screening tools need first to be validated to detect NeP itself, and then these so called "components". I could not understand the use of SAF as a gold standard instead of the proposed definition (irrespective of the grading system). By the way, the SAF is not displayed nor explained in the manuscript.

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: