Reviewer's report

Title: A mixed exercise training programme is feasible and improves quality of life and muscle strength in multiple myeloma survivors

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Reviewer: HAN-I WANG

Reviewer's report:

The authors did a good job in revising the manuscript according to all the reviewers’ comments and resubmitting it. The methodology, especially the approach taken towards measuring the study outcomes and the selection of the method used, is carefully described and well presented in the current version of the manuscript. Additionally, it is clear that the authors have invested a large amount of time and effort on adding more detailed information in every section of the article in order to respond to the reviewers’ comments. Inevitably, however, this excessive amount of information could make the article more difficult to follow for the reader compared to the original version. It is suggested that certain parts of the article could either be trimmed down in order to become more concise or the parts containing rather detailed information could be presented on a table or moved on the appendix.

Minor Essential Revisions

1. Study uptake

In the Results section (study uptake), the authors replaced the description of the study time frame as follows: “patients were recruited from October 2006 to December 2007” to “patients were recruited over a 15 month period”. This change might be related to one of the reviewers’ comments regarding the fact that the manuscript was submitted at present time while the study was conducted in 2006. However, in the reviewer’s opinion, it is more appropriate to state a clear study time frame rather than the overall length of study time when the work is presented in a scientific paper. Therefore, it is suggested that the authors should keep the original description.

2. Results

In order to make the article easier to read, it is suggested that some excessive details of study results could either be trimmed down or moved to relevant tables, figures or appendices. For instance, in the first paragraph the reason of the patient declining participation was described in a very detailed way. A possible way to make it more concise could be to only keep the sentence “Most patients (n=7) declined because of travelling distance” in the main body of the text, while moving the rest either to Figure 1 as a note or appendix.

Discretionary Revisions

3. The structure of the Results
Reporting the results in study time order is one way of describing the findings. This is the case here as the authors reported the changes of patients’ QoL and physical performance according to study time. However, this approach lacks strong connections to the study questions/outcomes and makes it difficult for the reader to make the necessary connections while reading. For instance, while the change of quality of life (QoL) was one of the main study questions, the results were scattered in two different sections. It is suggested that the study results could be grouped first and presented according to ‘types of change’ instead of the study time.

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

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.