Reviewer's report

Title: Reducing stress and supporting positive relations in families of young children with diabetes type 1: randomized control study to evaluate the effects of the DELFIN parenting program

Version: 4 Date: 13 June 2012

Reviewer: Sarah Jaser

Reviewer's report:

Thank you for the opportunity to review the manuscript titled “Reducing stress and supporting positive relations in families of young children with diabetes type 1: Randomized control study to evaluate the effects of the DELFIN program.”

The current manuscript presents the results of a randomized controlled trial of an intervention for parents of young children with type 1 diabetes. This paper addresses an interesting and important topic, but the study is limited by a relatively small sample size and reliance on self-report measures of parental distress and parenting. The authors may consider reframing the paper to focus on feasibility and preliminary efficacy of the intervention. Suggestions for changes are listed below.

Major Compulsory Revisions:

Abstract
1. Be careful not to overstate the results – there were no significant group x time interactions that would demonstrate the efficacy of the intervention. Instead, the authors may consider noting that the results suggest initial support for the intervention.

Introduction
2. The authors do a nice job of establishing the significance of the problem and the need for interventions for this population. However, there are two existing interventions for parents of young children with diabetes that need to be included: Monaghan et al, 2011 and Sullivan-Bolyai et al., 2010. How does the current study build on/differ from these other interventions?

Method
3. Please provide more information on the feasibility/acceptability of the intervention. What were the rates of attendance? What were the checks for intervention fidelity?

4. Data analyses – it is not clear how the group x time analyses were conducted – it seems that repeated-measures analysis or GLM may be more appropriate. Further, were the parents of the same children treated independently?

Results:
5. Inclusion of effect sizes would be helpful in determining potential for improvements in a large scale intervention.

Discussion
The authors appropriately note the limitations of the study make suggestions for improvements, such as including observational parenting data and conducting participation analyses.

6. The authors note that the intervention “can probably be delivered during routine clinical visits,” but it is not clear how a time-intensive (> 10 hours), group-based intervention could be translated to a clinic-based intervention.

7. Please say more about how the intervention targeted parental distress – is the first session on processing dysfunctional cognitions intended to reduce symptoms of depression and anxiety?

Minor Essential Revisions:
8. Please clarify the sentence in the first paragraph of page 5, “However, there is no concept with an explicit rationale, which includes…”

Discretionary Revisions:
9. The authors may consider reframing the paper to focus on feasibility and preliminary efficacy of the intervention.

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

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

**Statistical review:** Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

No conflicts of interest to report.