Reviewer's report

Title: Which aspects of health differ between working and nonworking women with fibromyalgia? - A cross-sectional study of work status and health

Version: 1 Date: 18 September 2012

Reviewer: Antoni Castel

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This manuscript describes the differences in health related variables between working and nonworking patients in a sample of 129 women of working age with fibromyalgia.

Findings indicated that the working women with fibromyalgia reported better health status than nonworking women with fibromyalgia.

The study adds some new aspects on the field, and has several major strengths, including the integration of physical, social and psychological assessments with subjective ratings and performance-based tests of physical capacity. Nevertheless, important issues are not addressed.

Major comments:

a. The purpose of the study was to investigate which aspects of health differ between working and nonworking women with fibromyalgia. With this rationale, why the authors divided the sample in three groups? Perhaps, it would be preferable to group working patients in a single category. This would clarify the results and would facilitate the statistical analysis. If the authors have considered the working conditions as important, it would be specified not only the time of dedication at work (full-time or partial-time), but also, the specific demands in job. This limitation has to be considered.

b. I have supposed that the level of significance of p#0.01 has been considered with the purpose to reduce the probability of type I errors. Nevertheless, in tables 1 and 2, p<0.05 were presented. The authors have to correct this point. Also, using the cut-off criteria of p#0.01, the p-value of p=0.013 would not be significant (see in Results the paragraph “activity and participation”).

c. Inclusion and exclusion criteria were not specified. Also, the authors did not clarify if FM patients were suffering another concomitant chronic pain condition.

d. The paragraph "Participants" is confusing. Apparently the authors excluded some different groups of participants in different moments and with different reasons (v.gr. “…35 did not meet inclusion criteria, and 61 declined to participate in the study, while 154 agreed to participate in an examination. Twenty-two of them did not meet inclusion criteria. …”).

e. Limitations of the work have to be considered in the text. Some of them are consequences of the commented above. Other possible limitations would be related with coping, the relative limitation of the sample or the influence of the
demands of family work in health status.

Minor comments:

a. Abbreviations are to be defined. What means CWP or ICF? (International classification of functioning, disability and health?).

b. The references that justified the use of the clinically significant differences for the 6MWT are not specified.

c. In the paragraph "References", articles 8 and 9 are identical.

d. Perhaps an abbreviation for “working women” and for “non working women” would facilitate the lecture of the original.

**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