Reviewer’s report

Title: Participation levels of physical activity programs for community-dwelling older adults: a systematic review

Version: 3  Date: 4 November 2014

Reviewer: Natasha Reid

Reviewer’s report:

I would just like to congratulate you on re-writing this paper to a much better standard of scientific writing and expression. I think it now provides a clear and concise overview of the research questions, and provides some important reflections and comments on future work so that we can better answer your questions within the research field. I only have very minor discretionary revisions this time and am happy for the paper to be published without another review.

Discretionary revisions

Abstract
Consider changing “Proportion of participants starting and completing the PA programs (respectively initial and sustained participation) were determined” to “Proportion of participants starting and completing the PA program (initial and sustained participation, respectively) were determined”

Considering changing “for 12 PA programs it was impossible…” to “for 12 PA programs it was not possible…”

Background
Paragraph 2, first sentence: Be clear about what you mean here. For example “Initial and sustained participation in PA programs is important....”

In the very last sentence in this section, you mention that that PA programs were characterised. I would suggest providing a bit more information on how or what they were characterised.

Study Selection
Paragraph 1, last sentence: You say that studies that reported on study protocols were excluded. Do you mean that studies that ONLY reported on protocols were excluded? Make this clearer.

Data Extraction
Change “way of recruitment” to “method of recruitment”

Discussion
In the first paragraph you say that initial participation could not be calculated for 5 PA programs – I believe this is supposed to say 12 PA programs.

Conclusions
The word “hampered” – perhaps change to “hindered”
You mentioned that a low mean age, high proportion of females etc are likely to increase levels of sustained participation. I think this may be making too much of the results as the power was very low. Perhaps say that “these factors should be investigated further as potential determinants of sustained participation.”

You also may want to call for future studies to make it best practice to include information regarding how many people were invited to participate in the PA program.

Well done.

**Level of interest:** An article of importance in its field

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

**Statistical review:** Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests