Reviewer's report

**Title:** Using Pedometers to Increase Physical Activity in Overweight and Obese Women: A Pilot Study

**Version:** 2  **Date:** 8 June 2009

**Reviewer:** Nanette Mutrie

**Reviewer's report:**

1. Is the question posed by the authors well defined? YES
2. Are the methods appropriate and well described? MOSTLY
3. Are the data sound? YES
4. Does the manuscript adhere to the relevant standards for reporting and data deposition? YES
5. Are the discussion and conclusions well balanced and adequately supported by the data? YES
6. Are limitations of the work clearly stated? NO
7. Do the authors clearly acknowledge any work upon which they are building, both published and unpublished? YES
8. Do the title and abstract accurately convey what has been found? YES
9. Is the writing acceptable? YES

**Discretionary Revisions**

1) Suggest change ‘subjects’ to participants throughout.

**Minor Essential Revisions**

2) It is not clear how the control group could record ‘weekly’ steps without also seeing daily steps. I do not know of any pedometer that would allow this. How do you know this group complied with the instruction to seal them again?

3) Discussion Line 17
   - Clarify if you are referring to your own study here or the cited meta-analysis since this is a different percentage increase than you have already reported
   - “In this study, pedometer users increased their number of steps by 27% over baseline.”

4) Discuss why you did not observe changes in any of anthropometric measures. This manuscript may provide additional insight (Gray et al., 2009)

**Major Compulsory Revisions**

5) The introduction is concise and provides a clear rationale for the need to establish methods of motivating overweight adults to be more physically active.
However, an area that should be included is the recommendation that overweight adults should accumulate at least 60 minutes of activity on most days of the week (Physical Activity Guidelines Advisory Committee, 2008). This should strengthen the rationale for establishing new ways to achieve this higher target. This element of the introduction will also allow discussion of these targets in the discussion section.

6) The introduction should provide some rationale for the need to target women more than men [perhaps remove this from methods]. In addition, a short rationale for why feedback from step counts might prompt behaviour change – perhaps a reference to the power of self-regulation/self-monitoring or other areas in which this as been a successful strategy?

7) Provide more details of the statistical tests. For example was this an ANOVA with repeated measures and are you reporting the p value of the F test for an interaction?

8) Discuss limitations and suggest future direction from ‘pilot’

References used in report


Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

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

Declaration of competing interests:

'I declare that I have no competing interests’