Reviewer’s report

**Title:** Does Pulmonary Rehabilitation address Cardiovascular Risk Factors in Patients with COPD?

**Version:** 2  **Date:** 20 January 2011

**Reviewer:** Peter Calverley

**Reviewer’s report:**

This is a very clear and carefully prepared paper describing the application of an effective pulmonary rehabilitation programme which produces clinically worthwhile benefits (see the ISWT and SGRQ improvements). The benefit observed tracks the change in blood pressure rather than any effect on ‘systemic inflammation’. My comments are minor and discretionary.

**Minor**

1. You should be explicit about whether cardiac therapies other than anti-hypertensives and statins were being used. It is no mean achievement to recruit a population like this where there is so little co-medication and this may have weighted things against you having an even larger effect. A comment about this would be reasonable.

2. Conversely participation in the rehabilitation course may improve adherence to therapy – could this explain any of the benefit seen?

3. Some more information about the patients who did not complete the programme is needed. Where they different with respect to disease severity PWV from other participants?

**Discretionary**

1. Although the power was low, was there any relationship between the magnitude of improvement in exercise performance and the change in PWV?

2. In an ideal world the smoking controls should have undergone a similar fitness increasing regime or better a programme of mild fitness improvement which would have produced comparable absolute increases in performance. I suspect the effect on PWV would have been similar to the COPD patients but this remains a speculation. A statement about the lack of a complete control arm is worth including in the discussion.

3. Another reason why the brachial PWV did not change is that it was not different from the ‘normal’ group to begin with. It would be helpful as to whether you considered the control values of the PWV to be high at study onset.

**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.