Reviewer's report

Title: Research priorities for non-pharmacological therapies for common musculoskeletal problems: nationally and internationally agreed recommendations

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Reviewer: Carlo Ammendolia

Reviewer's report:

This paper submitted by Foster et al is very well written, important and timely. Despite decade of research the burden of musculoskeletal pain and disability shows no sign of abating. To address this, the authors describe a consensus processes and report on findings and recommendations for future clinical trials on the effectiveness of non pharmacological therapies for common musculoskeletal conditions. Identifying research priorities is the first step to advancing knowledge in is field. Although directed primarily to researchers, the recommendations have implications for funding agencies, third party payers, primary care clinicians and patients.

1) Major Compulsory Revisions
There are no major compulsory revisions

2) Minor Essential Revisions
There are no minor essential revisions

3) Discretionary Revisions
Comments

It may have been useful to have seen a wider representation among the Clinical Trials Thinktank participants. Although there was representation from two patients, end users of this research also include primary care clinicians (non researchers). They did not appear to be represented in this group and may have provided additional insight on future research priorities from the perspective of working in the trenches with these patients. Although clinicians, (primarily physiotherapist) were involved in Stage 2 to prioritize the research recommendation they did not participate in coming up with the initial recommendations.

In an effort to facilitate knowledge transfer of your research priorities it would have been beneficial to also include representatives from a funding agency in the study. Stakeholder participation in your research can be the first step in improving the up take of your findings.

There was no indication of the final ranking of the research priorities among the thinktank participants. It would have been interesting to compare the rankings
among Stage 1 and Stage 2 participants.

It is uncertain how the prioritizing the research recommendations would differ if stage 2 was performed by participants from various clinical disciplines.

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

**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'