Reviewer's report

Title: RCT Examining the Effect of Exercise in People with Rheumatoid Arthritis on Anti-TNFalpha Therapy Medication

Version: 5 Date: 10 November 2010

Reviewer: Claudia Witt

Reviewer's report:

I have minor essential comment and I have corrected the errors directly in the paragraphs
- hypotheses were still not two sided
- the second hypothesis should be called alternative hypothesis.
- Statistics has to be clarified for the primary endpoint which should be named, here still the time point (8 or 26 weeks) has to be given.

Here the changes are already included.

Statistics:

For the primary endpoint (HAQ-DI at [DEFINE If this is after 8 or 26 weeks!] an analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) will be used to explore between group differences in terms of the continuous variables thereby accounting for baseline scores. A preliminary examination of the data will be undertaken to ensure there is no violation of the assumptions associated with ANCOVAs. An ANCOVA adjusts each subject's follow up score for his or her baseline score but has the advantage of being unaffected by baseline differences [55]. The fixed factor will be the group to which the participants were randomised while the covariates will be the baseline measures of the continuous outcome measures. The dependent variables will be the primary endpoint continuous outcome measures at 8 and 24 weeks. For secondary outcomes if the data is not normally distributed or categorical the adequate tests will be employed. A significance level of 0.05 will be set for any inferential statistics conducted.

Null hypothesis

People with RA taking anti-TNF# therapy medication who participate in dynamic group exercise on land or in water, will not demonstrate differences in functional ability, pain, fatigue or quality of life, when compared to a control group of individuals with RA taking anti-TNF# therapy medication who do not participate in dynamic 188 group exercise on land or in water.

Alternative Hypothesis

People with RA taking anti-TNF# therapy medication who participate in dynamic group exercise on land or in water, will demonstrate differences in functional ability, pain, fatigue or quality of life, when compared to a control group of
individuals with RA taking anti-TNF# therapy medication who do not participate in dynamic group exercise on land or in water.