Reviewer's report

Title: Night-time splinting after fasciectomy or dermo-fasciectomy for Dupuytren's contracture: a pragmatic, multi-centre, randomised controlled trial

Version: 1 Date: 3 May 2011

Reviewer: Maria Kostaki

Reviewer's report:

Major compulsory Revisions:

-In the secondary per protocol analysis, according to the analysis of methods, the no-splint group included individuals who did not use a splint or were given a splint once their extension loss exceeded the criterion agreed by the trial management group. In table 3, the number of patients listed to the no splint group is initially 68. However, according to the SCoRD Trial Flowchart in figure 1, among the 77 patients randomized to the no-splint group, 56 received the allocated intervention and hand therapy and 13 developed a contracture of the PIPJ and were given a splint as per protocol, which means that 69 patients should be listed to the no splint group in table 3. Was there another reason for excluding one more patient from the no-splint group in the secondary per protocol analysis?

-The trial shows no significant differences between the two groups. However, the no-splint group included patients that were given a splint during the trial, for different reasons. This means that the results referred to the no-splint group, contain data from patients that were finally given a splint. Couldn’t this have an influence to the evaluation of results? Should there be an additional result analysis excluding these patients from the no splint group? Additionally, it would be preferable to mention this point to the abstract.

Minor essential revisions:

-It would be recommended to state once the whole term standing for the abbreviation PIPJ.

-Some phrases need to be written more clearly. More specifically, the meaning in the last two phrases of the paragraph “interventions” and the second phrase of the paragraph “no splint group”, in page 6, is not very clear.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being published
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