Reviewer's report

Title: Idiopathic toe-walking in children, adolescents and young adults: a matter of local or generalised stiffness?

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Reviewer: eugene rameckers

Reviewer's report:

Authors: Raoul HH Engelbert, Jan Willem Gorter, Cuno SPM Uiterwaal, Elise van de Putte and Paul JM Helders
Title: Idiopathic toe-walking in children, adolescents and young adults: a matter of local or generalised stiffness?
Journal: BMC Musculoskeletal Disorders
Reviewer: Dr eugene rameckers, UM (eaa.rameckers@hetnet.nl)

I would like to thank the authors for this well written manuscript.

I have some comments and questions.
I invite the authors to answer these questions

Major Compulsory Revisions
The authors included 31 ITW with decreased ROM of the ankle.
The "diagnosis"ITW was based on retrospective data gathered with a questionnaire.
I miss data from medical records. (surgery, physiotherapy, period of ITW, till what age ITW was mentioned).
I think these data are very important to look into the different history of treatment and outcome.
If these data are not present, please put this more explicitly into the discussion.

The authors used the summation of the left and right sided values of active ROM and strength. I did not read why this was chosen. To me this calculation would be appropriate after statistical analysis for differences of left and right values. Please include this in the methods.

Minor Essential Revisions
Page 7
The ankle joint ROM was not included in the calculation of the total ROM. Please clarify the reason?

Page 8
The authors mention that QUS measurements of the right os calcis was used. Please clarify was only the right os calcis was chosen.

pag 15. I think table 1 has to be table 3
I miss in the discussion the influence of growth in puberty related to the cross sectional design. It is important in the discussion because of the statement that local stiffness might be the cause of the decrease of the ankle joint ROM.

Discretionary Revisions
The authors describe at page 15 to cases in their clinic.
I advise to skip this part. This paragraph does not add anything to this manuscript.
If the authors would like to add clinical values for treatment I would like to see a clinical decision protocol following table 3.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

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