Reviewer’s report

Title: Perceived exertion, comfort and working technique in professional computer users and associations with the incidence of neck and upper extremity symptoms

Version: 3 Date: 7 November 2011

Reviewer: Jack T. Dennerlein

Reviewer’s report:

While the reviewers responded our first review, there are still issues to be addressed by the authors. The major weakness of the manuscript is the clarity of writing. The added text to the previous reviews are poor in laying out and calcifying the text.

These are all minor essential revisions.

1) Clarity in writing is lacking in several places throughout the manuscript.
   a. The direction of the association of comfort and pain is unstated. Is more or less comfort associated.
   b. The added text just before the hypothesis has too many thoughts and the logic is unclear. It is unclear how this statement adds to justifying the hypothesis.
   c. In the first paragraph of the discussion it is unclear how the second half of the sentence relates to the first half. The model there is exposure and exertion – ths study is about exertion and pain.
   d. The first paragraph of the discussion is way long with so many different thoughts. A paragraph should contain one main thesis (topic). Suggest reorganizing the thoughts here.
   e. The rationale for controlling should be placed in the methods, not the discussion.
   f. The added sentence Just before the “Strengths and limitations paragraph, it is unclear how this study provides what the authors deem “objective” measures. Please clarify.

2) While a list of professions were provided, the reviewers were expecting a table listing traditional demographic of the population as is the case in many epi-studies. Also to understand how various co-variates may be related to the outcome.

3) The authors state several times that “The validity of self-reports has been questioned. This seems a bit of a subjective statement.

4) The added statement, the last sentence in the conclusions seems misplaced here without any supporting discussion. The idea of the application of these results seems worthy of discussion in the discussion section.
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.