Reviewer's report

Title: What influences a patient's decision to use custom-made orthopaedic shoes?

Version: 1 Date: 28 July 2011

Reviewer: Anita Williams

Reviewer's report:

This is clearly an interesting and well thought out study which has the potential to illuminate problems with OS that have already been identified but also the complexity of the interplay between influences on patients decisions to wear them or not. This novel and new view of the problem is somewhat hidden in the writing and therefore the opportunity to show that this is an exciting and novel piece of work is missed. This paper is worthy of revision in order to communicate this work more fully.

1. Is the question posed by the authors well defined?

The research question is initially detailed so that the reader can see how it has emerged from previous literature in this area. However, on reading the whole paper it becomes clear that the aim is to explore the interplay between the domains and factors that other studies have already identified.

Hence when it comes to the results and then the discussion, what is clear is that there is interplay and what patients do is achieve compromise based on what levels of acceptance they have. Much more emphasis could be made of this compromise (or rationalisation) and how this aligns with the clinicians' ability to ascertain what level of compromise the patients have.

Aligned with this is that I feel that much more could be written on the patients level of acceptance of their disorder and disability and therefore the acceptance of their shoes. At the moment this message is somewhat lost both in the discussion and in the conclusion.

If these two aspects are communicated and explored more fully then this would ensure that this work truly adds to the body of knowledge in this area and stands as being novel for its results.

At the end of your background I would add to your aim that you aim to identify the potential interplay between the factors that influence a patient's decision to use OS.

2. Are the methods appropriate and well described?

Overall- yes and it is an appropriate approach with the novel addition of quantitative data to support the qualitative data (rather than the usual approach of vice versa). I would change the subheading of patients to participants and then this changed from this point onwards in the text and tables. In the contact of your study they become participants. In your inclusion criteria they are patients who
are receiving their first pair between 2-4 months before the interview.

At the end of the background section line 88-92 is a description of the methods which is then repeated in the method section – I would recommend that you remove this.

I would start this section with the statement about obtaining ethics approval rather than this being at the end of the section. It is more chronological.

Line 140-143 needs clarification – I am not sure which data you are referring to and for which participant. Also, who you did you do the 2 or more interviews with and why?

Line 161-163 you need to be clearer and more succinct about the differences in coding being minor but still there was the need to reach agreement.

3. Are the data sound?

Results are all supported with evidence

Section 1b – I would like you to consider the statement about ‘positive opinion’ as to me it is hear that they seem to make a balanced judgement or compromise between appearance and other factors.

Domain 2 introduction line 247 -248 you state that ‘The influence…..thereafter’ It is not clear in the following sections what this relates to as some of the subheadings are underlined but not numbered (line 293 and 317)– should it be a 2f or an addition to 2e?

I am not sure about the term triangulation as this implies 3 sets of data collection methods or 3 sets of analysis – consider changing this.

4. Does the manuscript adhere to the relevant standards for reporting and data deposition?

Yes

5. Are the discussion and conclusions well balanced and adequately supported by the data?

In addition to the comments made in section 1, lines 400-403 could be emphasised in relation to the importance of this compromise.

Line 471-478 is a reiteration of information and needs taking out or synthesising with previous and similar comments.

The conclusion should emphasise what is the same as previous studies, what is different and what now needs to be done

6. Are limitations of the work clearly stated?

Yes

7. Do the authors clearly acknowledge any work upon which they are building, both published and unpublished?

Yes
8. Do the title and abstract accurately convey what has been found?
The abstract background and conclusion will need rewriting in relation to the requested revisions in the main body

9. Is the writing acceptable?
It would be useful to have the entire paper proof read as there are some grammatical errors, and on occasions poorly constructed sentences.

**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