Reviewer’s report

Title: Computer work and self-reported variables on anthropometric, computer usage, work ability, productivity, pain, and physical activity

Version: 1 Date: 8 April 2013

Reviewer: Morten Wærsted

Reviewer’s report:

This manuscript gives an impression of being a bit unfinished. However, the content seems sound, so it should be worthy of publishing when it is further prosessed by the authors. Due to the present state of the manuscript, I do not systematically go into details at present.

Major comments

The authors report in the introduction and the methods that data is collected for a number of variables. However, several of these variables are not reported in the results section. Why? I think one big advantage with the electronic publishing is the possibility to provide all data, so I urge the authors to do so. Some of these variables are commented upon in the discussion, which I find not good as long as the data are not given in the results section. One example of this is the reference to correlation between pain intensity and number of pain locations (first paragraph of the discussion section).

Please give reference to the tables and figures in the results section. That makes it easier to follow your presentation of your data.

Please discuss more thoroughly the methodological limitations of your data collection, including the fact that all data are collected at the same moment and with the same type of instrument (self report in a questionnaire), the fact that all data are self report (probably you could draw into your discussion the limitations of self report on i.e. work task found by other research groups), and the very selected material (do you have some data on the total cohort, i.e. gender distribution, age distribution and so forth, in order to give an idea of the representativeness). You state that you consider the work task to be similar for all subjects because all followed regulations from the Danish working environment authority. This argument is not obvious, at least not for a reader not familiar with the Danish conditions, so please elaborate more on this point.

Minor comments

Abstract:

I suggest that you omit the reference to a special interest for female gender, as this is not the case in the rest of the manuscript. You report on both gender, but find as expected the women report more pain. Delete the third sentence (starting
with “Despite …”) and delete the worded “female” in the first sentence of the Conclusion. I also suggest that you give the number 690 and not 804 as the number of subjects in the methods part of the abstract.

Methods:
Give also the number 690 in the first paragraph (instead of waiting till the end of the section). Otherwise the readers get bewildered when looking at Table1.

Comment regarding language

The language is mostly good. However, there are several examples of sentences that need reformulation, and some sentence lack an obvious meaning. Please, be aware of this when correcting the manuscript and possibly use some text editing expertise. If you have a manuscript with the same line numbers as the one I got, examples of bad language are i.e. found in page 3, line 24 (at least a word missing), line 29 (is ‘essence’ a good expression?), page 4, line 1-3, page 5, line 1-4, page 6, line 3 (a bit unclear what ‘both type of workers’ refer to – I’m hesitant to define workers with and without pain as to types of workers, but find no other logical reference).

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

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