Reviewer's report

Title: Functional improvements desired by patients before and in the first year after total hip arthroplasty

Version: 3 Date: 28 January 2013

Reviewer: Alexis Wright

Reviewer's report:

Analysis section: I would potentially suggest two reviewers performing the classification process independently and then meeting to discuss the reliability between reviewers; with a 3rd reviewer acting as the tie-breaker with any outstanding items. Similar to a situation where 2 authors retrieve data or score articles independently to minimize bias. Without looking directly at the free text responses, there is no clear way to know whether the patients were typically very specific with their answers or if some responses were difficulty to classify or misclassified if performed by only a single reviewer.

Table 2 and 3: at the 3 month time point the percentages appear to add up to 102%

Table 2 and 3: at the 12 month time point, the percentages add only to 97%

I agree with the authors comments in the discussion regarding patient satisfaction. This is in line with defining a successful outcome as the MCID which does not reflect patient satisfaction but only minimal improvement.

It may be worth mentioning in the discussion something about 3rd party payers and that potentially we are capturing inadequate outcomes.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

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.