Reviewer's report

Title: The intra- and inter-rater reliability of five clinical muscle performance tests in patients with and without neck pain.

Version: 2
Date: 29 October 2013

Reviewer: Sionnadh McLean

Reviewer's report:

Major revisions: none

Minor revisions: I have a number of small comments which relate to grammar and typos. No doubt there will be others that are picked up through the copy editing process. Nonetheless, here are the things that I picked up:

Pg 8 – study design - (in case a clear cut off point did not already existed). “Existed” should read “exist”

Pg 9 – Participants - who fulfilled the in- and exclusion criteria. I believe that “in-” should read “inclusion”

Pg 10 – Data collection – “If the participants’ met the in- and exclusions criteria, arrangement for the first assessment was scheduled” – “in- and exclusions criteria” should read “inclusion and exclusion criteria”

Pg 14 – Statistical analysis - The data collection took place with a maximum of five working days between the screening and the first assessment session. Intra-rater reliability was assessed on two days (a maximum of three working days between each assessment). Inter-rater reliability was assessed on two occasions (first and second assessment session). “occupations” should read “occasions” I believe. However I believe that this is a redundant amendment, this information relates to data collection and has already been discussed in the data collection section. I wonder if this amendment could simply be deleted here, making sure that the relevant information is included in the data collection section.

Pg 17 – Muscle endurance tests - “The SDC on The modified NFME test” – I don’t think the second “The” needs a capital T.

Pg 21 - The cranio-cervical flexion test – “These findings are in correspondence with the existing literature [29, 34, 36, 37].” I would suggest “These findings are consistent with the existing literature [29, 34, 36, 37].”

Pg 23 – study strength and limitations – should read study strengths and limitations

Pg 24 – Study strengths and limitations – “Likewise, we choose to use examiners recently certified physiotherapists, which may have contributed with variation.”
This is quite clumsy English – can I recommend something like “Likewise, the use of recently certified (or qualified) physiotherapists may have contributed to the variation.”

Pg 24 – On the other hand recently certifies physiotherapists. “Certifies” should read “certified” (or qualified)

Pg 24 – “The present study replicate a clinical setting,” – should read “The present study replicated a clinical setting,”

Pg 25 – final sentence – “Furthermore, determining the smallest detectable change for the CCFT reviled that a change in score has to be at least 5 mmHg to be interpreted as a real change.” “Reviled” should read “revealed”

Pg 36 – figure legends - you should be consistent across the figures about whether to capitalize the names of the tests.

Table 1 – Can I check with you that the VAS scale is 100. Is 0.1 and 5 really in mm?

**Level of interest:** An article of importance in its field

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

**Statistical review:** Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

'I declare that I have no competing interests’