Reviewer’s report

Title: The Patella pro study - Effect of a knee brace for treatment of the patellofemoral pain syndrome (PFPS): Design of a randomized clinical trial [DRKS-ID: DRKS00003291]

Version: 1 Date: 7 October 2013

Reviewer: Jim Richards

Reviewer's report:

1. Will the study design adequately test the hypothesis?
   Yes. This is a very interesting protocol, however it is very poorly written and structured.

2. Are sufficient details provided to allow replication of the work or comparison with related analyses: if not, what is missing?
   Yes

3. Does the manuscript adhere to the relevant standards for reporting and data deposition: if not, in what ways?
   Yes, but formatting and structure could be improved.

4. Is the writing acceptable?
   Although the messages are clear. This work would benefit from being proof read and corrected by someone with English as their first language.

Additional comments

Background: Please state in which populations the incidence stated is reported. Paragraph structure of the first 3 paragraphs could be improved. There is a lot of important literature missing from this including the possible proprioceptive effects and the improvement in mechanical stability. These need to be considered

1. Does bracing influence brain activity during knee movement: an fMRI study
2. Effects of Patellar Taping on Brain Activity During Knee Joint Proprioception Tests Using Functional Magnetic Resonance Imaging
3. A Clinical Study of The Biomechanics of Step Descent Using Different Treatment Modalities for Patellofemoral Pain

Suggest using tables rather than 3 lots of bullet points, pages 7-8.

There is a lack of a clearly articulated set of aims and objectives in the main document.
Under intervention the structure and writing style is poor.

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

**Quality of written English:** Not suitable for publication unless extensively edited

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