Reviewer's report

Title: Evaluation of pain and function after two home exercise programs in a clinical trial on women with chronic neck pain - with special emphasises on completers and responders

Version: Date: 30 November 2013

Reviewer: Petri Salo

Reviewer's report:

Dear authors,

you have managed to clearly improve the manuscript since the first revision. I will recommend publishing the manuscript just after couple of minor corrections.

a) You state that a physiotherapist did the clinical examination to the study subjects. Then you write on page 7 line 4 that "patients with the diagnosis of...." My question is that who gave the diagnosis, because a physiotherapist is not allowed to make a diagnosis. Thus, if the subjects did not meet a doctor stating the diagnosis you must explain where the diagnosis came from. Of perhaps you should just describe the symptoms.

b) page 7, randomization and blinding. Give a reference or manufacturer to the Computer program minitab v. 15

c) page 8, interventions section. "The remaining training period consisted of three weeks of exercise with the heaviest..." You should highlight here that the remaining time means up to one year and consisted of these four week periods where the training was like.....

d) page 9, line 10. "Most participants attended at least two instruction sessions" This is results and should be in results section or in the discussion.

e) page 12, sample size, last sentence "We did not fully succeed....." this again is results and should be either in the results or discussion.

f) page 18, second section, last sentence. "As mentioned above with respect to the achieved power of the present study, it cannot be excluded..." this is rather useless speculation in scientific writing and I would just skip it.

g) Table 3. Completers in STRENGTH at 4 to 6 months, n=19 the percentage should be 79% and non completers n=5 the percentage should be 21%. And actually can you say in the heading that "..compared to baseline" because you don't report the percentages compared to baseline n, which were 34 in STRENGTH and 23 in STRETCH.
Best regards
Petri Salo

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

**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

Petri Salo