Reviewer's report

Title: Rheumatoid arthritis patients' experiences of wearing therapeutic footwear - A qualitative investigation

Version: 1 Date: 16 August 2007

Reviewer: Hylton Menz

Reviewer's report:

General

This is an interesting paper which seeks to explore the experiences of rheumatoid arthritis (RA) patients in relation to the provision of therapeutic footwear. This is an important area of investigation, as clinical experience, along with the results of several previous studies, indicates a low level of compliance with therapeutic footwear. Because the aim of the project is exploratory (rather than hypothesis-testing), the qualitative approach taken is appropriate.

The interpretation of the results is well thought-out and reasonably well described. However, the paper is a little clumsy in some sections, and could have done with a more detailed final read before submission, as there are several grammatical issues and typographical errors.

Overall, the paper is a worthwhile contribution to the literature.

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Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)

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Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)

1. Abstract, line 14: two “which”s in one sentence – please consider rewording.
2. Abstract, line 23: consider “specialist footwear” rather than “this footwear”.
3. Introduction, line 7: no need for capital R for rheumatoid arthritis.
4. Introduction, line 9: comma after 50% has been superscripted.
5. Introduction, line 15: suggest “several studies”.
6. Introduction, line 27: sentence beginning “Although in some previous studies…” is difficult to follow and should be reworded.
7. Method: suggest “Method” rather than “Methodology”.
8. Method, line 1-3: suggest rewording this to remove first person, i.e: “I used semi-structured interviews"
9. Methods, line 20: insert apostrophe after “s” in “participants”. Please also check the use of plurals and apostrophes throughout the manuscript, as there are several inconsistencies.

10. Methods, line 21: no need for capital V in visual analogue scale.

11. Methods, line 25: please add full stop.

12. Methods, line 27-31: please be consistent with use of quotation marks. This applies throughout the manuscript.

13. Methods, line 36: sentence beginning “These were formed into main themes…” is difficult to follow and should be reworded.

14. Results: it may be worth adding subheadings to separate women from men.

15. Results: please check the consistency of full stops used for spacing the quotes. There are also a few typographical errors throughout this section.

16. Discussion, line 3: the statement “In this study the participants were all females” is incorrect.

17. Discussion: please check the use of paragraph spacing throughout the discussion.

18. Discussion, page 4, para 2: the sentence “But the participants…” needs to be reworded as it is not a complete sentence.

19. The section “recommendations for practice” should be restructured into paragraph form rather than point form.

Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

What next?: Accept after minor essential revisions

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