Reviewer's report


Version: 1 Date: 18 July 2007

Reviewer: Dave Baxter

Reviewer's report:

General

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

This study was completed as a pilot study for a larger, adequately powered trial. The paper as currently written states the study aims and discusses the findings as if the latter had been completed (e.g. much of discussion compares current findings in terms of effectiveness in the light of previous findings). The paper needs to be substantially rewritten.

Abstract
This lacks important detail; in particular there is no mention of the intervention packages, length of treatment period etc. The data on patient recruitment is misleading.

Background
The background reviews some of the pertinent previous work in this field; however there are notable omissions: the UK BEAM trial (the largest clinical trial to date in the area) is not mentioned.

Aims
The first of these aims are not achievable with the current design and subject numbers.

Methods
A CONSORT flow diagram should be included.

Discussion
The Discussion needs to be reconsidered in terms of what may be reasonably inferred from the current data/research design i.e. a feasibility study. The comment about patient referral should be noted as relevant to the UK NHS system.
Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)

Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

**What next?:** Unable to decide on acceptance or rejection until the authors have responded to the major compulsory revisions

**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'