Reviewer's report

Title: How good is inspection of movement control tests of the lumbar spine? A reliability study

Version: 2 Date: 29 May 2007

Reviewer: Gregory Lehman

Reviewer's report:

General

This is a valuable study. It is an excellent example of clinical research that can be performed with minimal resources in a clinic environment. My congratulations to the researchers.

Major/Minor Essential Revisions

Title: The title is awkward. Something more simple may be better. E.g. Reliability of movement control tests in the lumbar spine.

You aren't really testing how “good” the tests are, rather just their reliability.

I would like to see more information describing the exact instructions to the participants in the study. How do you tell the participants to move? Can you publish the standardized instructions? Can they change how they perform the test with feedback? The ability to change their performance is important. If they perform the test “incorrectly” is that because they are physically incapable of performing it “correctly” or because they chose a pattern of movement that happens to be considered incorrect?

You collected both a symptomatic and asymptomatic population. In your methods it appears that you pooled all of the data together for the analysis. Did you perform separate repeatability analyses on the different participant groups?

Paragraph 9 in the Discussion: “One study and other….” This is an awkward sentence that needs to be written more clearly. The paragraph also seems unnecessary. You did not measure stability and can not make an comments regarding it. I can understand how it is relevant but it appears out of place with the majority of your discussion.

A number of grammatical and spelling errors exist through out the text that need to be corrected.

Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

Considering this is an open source journal and fully online have you considered uploading some video examples of normal and abnormal movements control tests. This journal is an excellent vehicle to do such a thing.

What next?: Accept after minor essential revisions
Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

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