Author’s response to reviews

Title: Clinical effectiveness of post-operative splinting after surgical release of Dupuytren's contracture: a systematic review

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Author’s response to reviews: see over
Response to reviewers’ comments

We thank the reviewers for the helpful and constructive comments. These have been addressed as outlined below:

Reviewer: Adriaan Grobbelaar

No amendments requested

Reviewer: Nicola Massy-Westrupp

Minor essential revisions:
1. the condition and the surgery – we have added at the end of the section entitled: ‘rationale for using splints’ a paragraph outlining the reasoning for splints after surgery for DD

2. why 6 week as minimum splinting time? This is a good question and thank you for highlighting it. The focus of this review was to look at the evidence of long-term effect of splints on scar maturation and contractures recurrence. Splinting used for 6 weeks or less would be outside the scope of this review as scars will not have reached the later phase of healing and the longer-term effect on scar contracture and recurrence could not be established. We have added this reasoning to the section outlined under point 1 ‘rationale for splinting’ and also already address this in the discussion under ‘length of follow-up’.

3. conclusions: these have now been expanded in the appendix to include some more specific conclusions regarding the level of evidence, the positive and negative effects of splinting. In order to keep to the maximum word count allowed of 350 words we have slightly amended the abstract