Reviewer's report

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

Version: 1 Date: 12 June 2008

Reviewer: Nicola Massy-Westropp

Reviewer's report:

Minor Essential Revisions

Dear Debbie, Christina and editors,

this is a necessary, well-orchestrated and written review. I believe it should be published.

1. The condition and the surgery - will you add a statement on why splints are even considered, for example the rate of recurrence of contracture?

2. I wonder why you have put 6 weeks as a minimum splinting time. If there is no current evidence for time frames or for splinting - is that really justified?

3. The results are not as conclusive as you would like, but can you put in a formal statement in the abstract, rather than suggesting the need for more research only? For example please do state what level of evidence there is, how much there is, what quality it is and if it is equivocal, positive, not positive for splinting AND what exactly - either for the maintenance of extension but not for the maintenance of flexion etc/ I think this will make the review more useful to clinicians who try and summarise it for clients and colleagues.

thank you for letting me read this.
Nicola

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