Reviewer's report

Title: Work-related musculoskeletal disorders among Nigerian Physiotherapists.

Version: 2 Date: 24 April 2008

Reviewer: Linda A Merlino

Reviewer's report:

The authors have improved this manuscript with their changes, but it is still in need of revisions.

MAJOR revisions

1. Methods - page 4
   Paragraph 3 - Fisher’s exact tests should be performed in cases where there are fewer than 5 in a cell. The authors state that they dichotomized the variable "number of hours per week in direct patient care" yet that isn't described anywhere so should be eliminated.

2. Results – Under the heading Job Risk Factors – page 5
   In this section you state that those with WRMDs were asked for responses. Since there are 115 people who fall into that category (and the authors have 126) the subjects who do not experience WRMDs wouldn't be eligible to answers questions about factors that they think caused a problem they don't have.

3. Results - Under the heading Coping Strategies – page 5
   The numbers presented in the text do not match the numbers in the Table 5. As with the comment on Table 4, only the subjects who reported a WRMD should be included in the data if the data reflect strategies for coping with WRMDs. Does irrelevant Number in the last category mean "no response" or is it "Never"?

4. Table 4, two columns for the data are not necessary, one column with the number of responses and the percentage in parenthesis is sufficient. The word "Number" as the column heading should be "Number of Respondents (%)".

Minor Revisions

   Line 1 - Methods: the survey was administered to - not conducted among.
   Line 3 - Two hundred ......self administration with 126 physiotherapists (delete the number of males and females) returned completed surveys for a 58.1% response.

2. Background – page 3
   paragraph 3, line 1 "The trend in research" would more appropriately be stated
as "Some research".

3. Background – page 3
paragraph 3, line 6 “The physically demanding nature of the physiotherapy profession seems to contribute to the high prevalence and development....” - would be better stated as “The physically demanding nature of the physiotherapy profession may contribute to the development of WRMDs resulting in a high prevalence.” (i.e., the nature of the job does not cause the prevalence).

4. Background – page 3
paragraph 4, line 7 - the word "features" should be replaced with work factors or work practices and should be used consistently throughout the paper.

5. Results - page 5 - Prevalence
paragraph 1 - A grammatical correction to the second sentence is needed. This should read "The 12-month prevalence of WRMDs in different body parts compared to the findings of previous similar studies is presented in Table 2.

6. Results - page 5 - Prevalence
paragraph 2 - "Table 3 presents the respondents’ characteristics. Gender (p=0.008) and BMI (p=0.04) were the only factors that differed between those who did or did not report a WRMD." (i.e., statistical methods are showing differences, not associations).

7. Results – page 5 - Onset of Injury
Line 3 typographical error (figure)1) should be (Figure 1). At the end of this paragraph, (Data not shown) should be included.

8. Results – page 5 - Effects of WRMDs
At the end of this paragraph, (Data not shown) should be included.

9. Results – page 5 - Job Risk Factors
Heading - (see Background, paragraph 4 comment in minor revisions) Work Practices or Work Factors would be a suggested heading

10. Results – page 5 - Job Risk Factors
The words irrelevant and significant become confusing with the statistical concept of significance. Better terminology might be “not important” and “important.”

11. Discussion – page 6
Third paragraph, first sentence – delete “implicitly found a significant association between WRMDs and gender” – a difference, not an association was reported based on the statistical tests performed. A more precise sentence would be “Our study found a significantly higher prevalence of WRMDs among female physiotherapists”. Delete the word “Thus” in the next sentence.
Table 4.
A suggested title would be "Work Factors that physiotherapists identified as contributors to WRMDs" (see Item 4- Minor revision comment)

**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