Reviewer's report

Title: Hypnosis as a treatment of chronic widespread pain in general practice. A randomized controlled pilot trial

Version: 1 Date: 29 December 2007

Reviewer: Stefan Bergman

Reviewer's report:

An interesting but rather small study and the results needs to be more thoroughly discussed according to the "major compulsatory" below.

Major Compulsatory
1. I really need some comment on the rational for that treatment with hypnosis could be helpful for this group of patients. Is the expectation that there should be a change in cognition or perhaps even in neurofysiology? Any relevant experimental data?
2. The authors have to comment more on why they have chosen to use a non-validated instrument. It is also mentioned that the answeres are given on VAS scales but the form i table 1 more gives the impression of Lickert type of scales.
3. Since the questionnaire is new, it is hard for the reader to apprehend the clinical relevance of the change. This is also highlighted by the large gap in baseline points between treatment and control groups. It also seems that only a few very good responders are responsible for the result. This need to be commented.

Minor Essential
1. Since the figures on prevalence of CWP seems to be higher in Norway (according to cited references) than in other comparable countries it could be helpful to have some more data on prevalence and perhaps a comment in the discussion on if this also could have an effect on outcome of treatment.
2. It could be helpful with a clarification in the last paragraph of page 5. I don't really follow that the first mainstream type of hypnosis was introduced to the patients and then that the second type was used. Suppose that I misapprehend but so may other readers.
3. It is a problem that the evaluation is done by the therapist himself, and the authors rises this question on page 8. Could this account for the effect?
4. For these small samles that perhaps not follow a normal distribution for outcome, non-parametrical tests could be considered more relevant than t-test.

Discretionary
1. The authors could chose to also give the one year figures for the intital
treatment group in figure 3

2. Despite table 2, I don't really follow how the scoring was done, and the relevance of the example scores.

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

**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