Reviewer's report

Title: The 5x1 DAFNE Study Protocol: A cluster randomised trial comparing a standard 5 day DAFNE course delivered over 1 week against DAFNE training delivered over 1 day a week for 5 consecutive weeks

Version: 1 Date: 28 July 2012

Reviewer: Jyothis George

Reviewer's report:

Elliot and co-workers describe the protocol for a cluster randomised trial, comparing a standard 5 day DAFNE course delivered over 1 week against DAFNE training delivered over 1 day a week for 5 consecutive weeks. In addition, there are several sub studies that are included in the manuscript including a preference survey, health economics analysis and a qualitative study. By packaging these few studies together, the readability of the protocol is certainly compromised and a diagram or a table listing out these substudies would help the reader.

Some of the text here is written in future tense and the rest in past tense which makes the manuscript harder to read. Please try to ensure consistency.

Major Comments

There has already been a randomised trail of an education intervention in the UK, looking at a less intensive schedule spread over weeks [Biophysical and Psychological effectiveness of a Brief Educational Intervention for Self-Efficacy in Type 1 Diabetes - (BITES): A randomised control trial. Diabetic Medicine 25 (12); 1447-1453]. Please discuss how the present trial design is different. If the results of the present study and the BITES trial are divergent, it would certainly be of interest to researchers and practitioners.

Minor Comments

1) "seven out of a possible 74 DAFNE centres volunteered to take part." Why was the uptake low? Did the centres find it easier to do 1-week long DAFNE sessions?

2) "The exclusion criteria were as follows: severe diabetic complications." Please specify what is meant by 'severe diabetic complications'

3) There are a few other minor grammatical and spelling errors, but I haven't listed them all in the absence of line or page numbers in the manuscript. Here are a few examples: 'we need 150 participants to complete the study' and "to CE the project manager", "teaching style of an Educator, "not consented to the Trial", "HbA1c will be measured at local laboratories DCCT aligned"

Structured comments
1. Will the study design adequately test the hypothesis?
   Yes
2. Are sufficient details provided to allow replication of the work or comparison with related analyses: if not, what is missing?
   A key study missed - as above
3. Does the manuscript adhere to the relevant standards for reporting and data deposition: if not, in what ways?
   Yes
4. Is the writing acceptable?
   Scope for improvement, as above

**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