Author's response to reviews

Title: Peer support to decrease diabetes-related distress in patients with type 2 diabetes mellitus: design of a randomised controlled trial

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Dear editor,

Please find enclosed our manuscript, “Peer support to decrease diabetes-related distress in patients with type 2 diabetes mellitus: design of a randomised controlled trial”, which we would like to submit for publication as a study protocol in BMC Endocrine Disorders.

This manuscript describes the study design and methods of a randomised controlled trial of a group-based, peer support programme for type 2 diabetes patients. We hypothesise that participation in this programme decreases diabetes-related distress. High levels of diabetes distress in patients can impede patient self-care and thereby compromise glycaemic control. Peer support might decrease diabetes distress, as peers understand and have dealt with similar problems, and can help motivate each other. This randomised controlled trial investigates a group-based peer support programme of six sessions, based on the social support model. A recent systematic review concluded that evidence of benefits of peer support in patients with type 2 diabetes mellitus is too inconsistent due to weak theoretical foundation of the interventions. We expect our intervention to be effective because of a strong theoretical foundation and research development in line with the Medical Research Council framework. This combination led to what makes our peer support intervention unique, namely both voluntary laypeople –peer leaders– and group psychotherapists together leading the peer support groups.

We hope you will consider publication of this study protocol. Hereby, we provide the requested responses to your questions:

1) We have forwarded the requested documentation on ethical approval and funding approval to BMCSeriesEditorial@biomedcentral.com.
2) Our study received external funding from the Dutch Diabetes Research Foundation and the study protocol has undergone peer-review. The Dutch Diabetes Research Foundation is not a commercial organization. There are no conflicts of interest.
3) Our study is ongoing as we recently finished collecting data for T2 and we will soon start analysing all data collected.
4) No publications containing the results of this study have been published or submitted to any journal.

We hope to have answered all your questions.

Sincerely, on behalf of the co-authors,

Lianne de Vries, MSc
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