Reviewer’s report

Title: Effectiveness of a lifestyle exercise program for older people receiving a restorative home care service: study protocol for a pragmatic randomised controlled trial

Version: 2 Date: 4 June 2013

Reviewer: Ruth Hubbard

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The aim of this study is to describe the protocol for a randomized controlled trial comparing a functional exercise program to a more traditional exercise program for older people receiving a restorative home care service.

The rationale for the study is clearly explained, with good reference to the existing evidence.

The manuscript is well written, logical and coherent. The hypotheses (that functional exercise will be undertaken more often, more likely to be continued, result in greater functional gains) are robust. The sample size is justified and functional outcome measures and instruments clearly summarized.

I have only two queries, which I do feel are essential but trust that the authors can make.

MINOR ESSENTIAL REVISIONS

Participants are “referred for a restorative home care service” but I am not clear whether these are patients discharged from hospital or all community-dwellers. Intermediate or transitional care programs are very different, not just across different countries but across Australia. It would be helpful to have a little more detail of what else is provided in the Perth program (e.g. pharmacy review, OT home visit, CGA etc).

Two of the hypotheses (that functional exercise will be undertaken more often, more likely to be continued) do not seem to be addressed in the measures section.

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