Reviewer's report

**Title**: Exercise therapy, manual therapy, or both, for osteoarthritis of the hip or knee: a factorial randomised controlled trial protocol

**Version**: 3  **Date**: 9 January 2009

**Reviewer**: Gordon Doig

**Reviewer's report**:  
Thank you for submitting this protocol paper to our Journal. It is extremely well written and provides excellent references to support your decisions. It could serve as a model template for others to follow.

Could I please ask you to address this one minor issue:

The following sentence on Page 15 may confuse some readers: "Requirements for an ideal ITT include (i) full compliance with the randomised intervention, and (ii) follow-up on all participants [45]."

Given your discussion of multiple-imputation, I do not believe you intend to 'exclude' patients from your ITT if follow-up is missing nor if they are not fully compliant. I suggest you modify or delete this sentence and add the explicit statement that you intend to include ALL patients, including those who are not fully compliant AND those with missing outcomes in your ITT. If this is not your intention, could you please explain exactly what you do intend to do. There are no word count limitations in this Journal.