Reviewer’s report

Title: The randomized shortened dental arch study (RaSDA): design and protocol

Version: 2 Date: 19 October 2009

Reviewer: lawrence friedman

Reviewer’s report:

a) The Abstract contains more information than the body of the paper. For example, the existence of the pilot study is much clearer in the Abstract and the numbers of people enrolled in both the pilot and main study are stated in the Abstract, but not in the body of the paper. The paper should also clearly provide the results of the pilot study and how it was modified for the full scale trial.

b) There is no discussion of figure 4, except a cryptic statement that “the number of cases was lower than expected ….” This needs to be expanded with reference to the figure.

c) In the sample size section, the expected difference of 20% versus 5% seems quite large. How and why was it selected?

d) There are several minor corrections/clarifications: For example, it is probably inappropriate to say at the end of the Abstract that this is “one of the most comprehensive randomized trials.” Although there is a glossary, it would be helpful to spell out all acronyms the first time they are used in the text. It is fine to refer to CONSORT, but a reference should be included. On page 10, under Outcomes, probably don’t need to say that “subjective variables are gaining increasing significance…” In the last paragraph on page 15, don’t need both “costly” and “expensive.”