Reviewer's report

Title: Assessing the effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of subcutaneous nerve stimulation in patients with predominant back pain due to failed back surgery syndrome (SubQStim study): Study protocol for a multicentre randomized controlled trial.

Version: 1 Date: 29 March 2013

Reviewer: Simon Thomson

Reviewer's report:

Discretionary revision
I note that during trial you will implant a device of only 30% pain reduction in VAS or any improvement with VAS as long as an improvement in function and yet your primary outcome is 50% reduction in VAS Back pain at 9 months.

I think the reader of this study design would like to understand why you have done this. Is it because you expect to see an evolution of VAS reduction with the OMM addition to the PFNS or Sub Q as you call it.

Secondly the initialled term SQS is a commercial term that only Medtronic and their users use. More correctly the neuromodulation field has settled on the term Peripheral Nerve Field Stimulation - PFNS.
In the interests of clarity in the future for search terms I think you should dispense with your commercial sponsor's name and call it PFNS.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.

Declaration of competing interests:
I declare that I have no competing interests