Author's response to reviews

Title: Self-Management in aged care settings: a design for a cluster randomised controlled trial of a psychosocial intervention to improve social participation and autonomy among seniors with a dual sensory impairment

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Author's response to reviews: see over
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To the Editorial Office of Trials

Submission of a revised manuscript

Dear Madam, Sir,

Thank you very much for the opportunity to revise and resubmit our manuscript ‘Effectiveness of a Self-Management Program for dual sensory impaired seniors in aged care settings: study protocol for a cluster randomized controlled trial’ (id = 1250974592981594) of the authors Lieve M. Roets-Merken, Maud J.L. Graff, Sytse U. Zuidema, Pieter G.J.M. Hermsen, Steven Teerenstra, Gertrudis I.J.M. Kempen and Myrra J.F.J. Vernooij-Dassen for publication in Trials.

We would like to thank the reviewer for his encouraging comments to enhance this study protocol. Hereby our point-to-point responses to his concerns.

Response to the reviewer

Reviewer’s report
GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS
The authors present the design of a cluster randomized controlled trail of a psychosocial intervention to improve participation and autonomy among seniors with sensory impairment.
The article is easy for reading and well explained; besides this, the idea is interesting in order to improve the quality of life of elderly people who live in home care centres. However there are some considerations that they should correct before accepting it.

Response of the authors
Thank you very much for the positive remarks.

Major Compulsory Revisions
Reviewer’s report
TITLE
Although the title includes the adjective “psychological” regarding intervention, when they explain the hypothesis they don’t include anything about the term “Psychological”. This “mistake” needs to be clarified.

Response of the authors
Page 1, lines 2-4
We have omitted the term ‘psychosocial interventions’ and rephrased the title conform the journal style: ‘Effectiveness of a Self-Management Program for dual sensory impaired seniors in aged care settings: study protocol for a cluster randomized controlled trial’.

Reviewer’s report

ABSTRACT
The section called Methods should read Methods/design according to Authors’ Instructions. 
The section called “discussion” is very poor. They should improve it.

Response of the authors
Page 2, line 36;
We have changed the section title Methods in Methods/design.
Page 2-3, lines 51-58
The section Discussion has been extended.

Reviewer’s report

STUDY SAMPLE
They should also define the term “severe cognitive problems” better and their proposal in order to measure this situation.

Response of the authors
Page 5-6, lines 130-136; page 17, line 466 Table 1; page 13, line 331-333
We explain in the text that we use the DSM IV criteria for measuring cognitive problems, in particular the criteria for capacities in executive functioning, i.e. planning, organizing, sequencing and abstracting, and we deleted the term ‘severe’. The choice for the 4 capacities is based on their relevance when performing self-management tasks. We added a table (Table 1) which indicates how these criteria could be used in seniors with a dual sensory impairment.

Reviewer’s report

INTERVENTION
As the study aims to assess the possibility of seniors carrying out normal activities to sustain social participation (role management) and, of course, daily activities, the authors should have also assessed the seniors’ functional ability.

Response of the authors
Page 9, lines 230-232; page 19, line 472, Table 2.
We assess functional ability by measuring ADL (Katz) and IADL (ACS-subtest IADL).

Minor Essential Revisions

Reviewer’s report

KEYWORDS
They use too many keywords, some of them without interest. I think they can eliminate the words “licensed practical nurse” and perhaps “senior” because they use “aged care”.

Response of the authors
Page 34, line 62
We removed the words seniors and nurses.
Reviewer’s report

(1) STUDY DESIGN
The authors should explain the reason why they linked a licensed practical nurse to each participant DSI-senior and why they have not included other professionals who are within the staff of the aged care setting such as social workers, psychologists and specifically nursing assistants who are the closest professionals to seniors in this type of centres.

(2) Discretionary Revision STUDY SAMPLE
The authors should study the possibility to include the nursing assistant with the support of nurses instead of only nurses.

Response of the authors
For this trial, we selected the professionals who offer daily care and who are the closest to the seniors. In the Netherlands, these are the licensed practical nurses. In the discussion we added that also other professional caregivers who are close to the seniors in daily care situations, such as care assistants, can offer the program.

We believe that the manuscript has improved by the changes made in addressing the comments and suggestions of the reviewer and the editor, and we hope to that you will now consider our manuscript for publication in Trials.

With kind regards,
on behalf of the other authors

Lieve Roets-Merken

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