Reviewer’s report

Title: Interventions to reduce sitting in office workers: design of a randomised control trial

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Reviewer: Barbara Wizner

Reviewer’s report:

Overall, this is a nice study to provide information about effectiveness of specific interventions focused on reducing sitting in generally healthy academic/administrative employees, who work with computer at least 15 hour/weekly (or at least 4 hours daily).

The study has innovative element, such as comparison of the single, traditional method of changing behavior such as subjects’ education and the combined interventions (education and ergonomic intervention using sit-stand workstation). The study design was clearly formulated and adequately to the objectives of the trial, primary and secondary outcome. To my knowledge, the similar study was not published.

Strength of the study is the objective, high-quality measure of sitting and activity at the workplace by actigraph. The baseline data retrieved from actigraph are very valuable and provide opportunity to assess a real changes of behaviors.

The interesting is assessment of single intervention, education – which is probably more accessible and prevalent than sit-stand workstation - and their combination. This allows to assess the superiority of one intervention to another or their equivalence.

Major compulsory revisions:

The Authors provide the information that “The office set-up in the workplace settings for this trial is predominantly private, single occupier offices with few work centres using open plan office design” and this study setting will assist with maintaining blinding of participants.

Please let me ensure, whether the study is addressed to employees of the same building, the research team?

In my opinion, this approach does not ensure complete blindness and inability to exchange information / knowledge / experience between the study participants. Please specify, how do you prevent situations like this? Is possible?

The study sample is small (3x20 persons) and consisted of volunteers among academic employees, so cannot be representative even for these staff. However, that is a pilot of the study - the Authors have mentioned about it at the end of discussion.
Is the study have a chance to be continued?

Please specify more details about statistical analyses design.

Minor essential revisions:

To increase the precision of the manuscript (protocol), I would suggest to adopt the title the same as in the attached documents: Evaluation of ergonomic and education interventions in university office-based workers. A randomized controlled trial.

Discretionary revisions:

It would be interesting and valuable to extend the follow-up period and to observe the changes in anthropometric measure and cardio-metabolic markers, such as glucose, HDL-cholesterol, triglycerides.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests