Reviewer's report

Title: A randomised trial of a nurse and peer led support program to assist women in gynaecological oncology: the PeNTAGOn study (Peer and Nurse support Trial to Assist women in Gynaecological Oncology)

Version: 2 Date: 13 November 2012

Reviewer: Rolf Wahlstrom

Reviewer's report:

General

This is a well-written manuscript, comprehensively describing the study protocol for an on-going study. The schematic diagram (Figure 1) is very useful for overall information of the study. The general requirements for publication in Trials are met, although a few additions are needed, which will be detailed below. In addition some editorial corrections must be made, particularly regarding the list of references.

Necessary revisions

1. Clarify where the study will be conducted. How many sites? Differences between sites? Will sites contribute equally?
2. How many nurses will be trained? Will there be more than one at each site?
3. How many peer support women will be trained? How many women will maximally be supported by one peer?
4. Added information on “usual practice” in the “usual care arm”: What is the “Pre-treatment usual care”? Does it include visits to nurses or doctors or peer support groups?

Minor revisions

1. The hypotheses for the third secondary outcome indicates a lowering of psychosexual functioning, while it should be the opposite.
2. Table 1: It is a bit confusing that the baseline assessment is called “pre-treatment” as the authors use this term in the text when referring to the first follow-up (Study hypotheses, Primary endpoint).
3. The title should include “radiotherapy” (or maybe even “curative radiotherapy”) as this is the main inclusion criterion.

Abbreviations

The list is not complete. AQ, QoL and MDT are missing. ECOG and MDT are not explained in the text. Abbreviations in the legend of Figure 1 should be presented in alphabetical order.

References
The authors have not followed the journal’s guidelines in the following aspects:
-- Journal names should be abbreviated (exception ref #62 and 65);
-- Words in titles should not be capitalised (e.g., #2, 4, 5, 9, 10);
-- All authors should be listed up to 30; if more authors add et al. Ref #2, 20, 56, 65.

Additionally there are a few other errors:
Duplication of authors: #11, 65
Authors’ names abbreviated: #24
Missing comma after year: #30
Missing space after colon: #4

Edits
The most common, and numerous, errors are no space between last letter before brackets. A few times brackets are placed after the full stop.
Headings need to be revised and aligned. For example, the first heading in the Background should be aligned with the other headings. Only the first word should be capitalised.
The indefinite article before RCT should be consistent: either ‘a’ or ‘an’, not both. Error of pronoun in the fourth sentence in the description of Intervention session 2: should be “her”, not “their”.
Years should not be abbreviated to “yrs” in plain text.