Reviewers report

Title: Automated real time text messaging identifying acute stroke patients for clinical trials

Version: 1 Date: 21 May 2014

Reviewer: Erik Cobo

Reviewers report:

I read the paper from Jegzentis et al. about identifying acute stroke patients, and I think it is suitable for publication in Trials.

I would like to provide some suggestions in order to help authors to improve their paper.

- Major Compulsory Revisions

On the background you specify that “we focused on minimization of time delay”, which is much more relevant that your minor surrogate objectives of feasibility and stability of the system. Please, add some speculation in your discussion about how big can be the expected effects of your system in the reduction of the time delay —either reduction of the minutes to treatment, or the increment of the proportion of patients treated within some target time.

Following STROBE recommendations, please change ‘ns’ for exact p values in table 1 and add a sentence about the practical relevance of such observed differences between cohorts (probably saying that you interpret that they are not relevant —if so). [Optionally, please consider substituting those p values for an exploratory forest plot of the averages and proportions observed in the 3 cohorts.]

The reduction in the time delay would be beneficial not only for stroke trials, but also for the stroke patient evolution outside trials (as you said in the introduction). Please, add this potential benefit in the conclusions and consider speculating further about the expected effect size in patient health outcomes as well as the harms, costs and feasibility to include this system in usual stroke patient care.

- Minor essential Revisions

Please, consider adding in the discussion one comment about the transportability of your system to other settings.

- Discretionary revisions

None

Erik Cobo

Level of interest: An article of outstanding merit and interest in its field

Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being published
**Statistical review:** Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests