Reviewer's report

Title: First metatarso-phalangeal joint arthrodesis versus proximal phalanx hemiarthroplasty for hallux rigidus: Feasibility study for a randomised controlled trial

Version: 2
Date: 22 December 2013

Reviewer: Ian A Harris

Reviewer's report:

This manuscript reports the protocol for a randomised trial to compare hemiarthroplasty to arthrodesis for osteoarthritis of the 1st metatarsophalangeal joint. The study, with 15 participants in each arm, is designed to provide information not currently available in order to design a larger, similar trial.

General comments

The study question is important and relevant to current practice. The study design is adequate to address the hypothesis. Methods are described in order to allow replication (although note comments below). Statistical analysis is appropriate. The writing is excellent.

Minor revisions

1. Randomisation in blocks is not necessary. Using blocks of 6 will lead to a lack of concealment for every 6th (and possibly 5th) participant. I suggest simply having the 30 participants randomised.

2. The study aims to determine the acceptability of the process by interviewing surgeons and patients. This part is not addressed in the methods. How will this be done and how will the information be used?

3. Page 7, Para 2: "arthrodesis where better" should read "arthrodesis were better"

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests