Reviewer’s report

Title: Derivation and validation phase for the development of clinical prediction rules for rehabilitation in chronic nonspecific low back pain patients: a protocol of a randomized controlled trial

Version: 1 Date: 10 October 2014

Reviewer: Nithima Vichatrong

Reviewer’s report:
Comment: This research paper is quite interesting. It tried to create a new way of clinical prediction rule in order to choose exercise therapy method. However, the author should address one important point on a concern that this CPR may be used to choose patients for only one method of exercise. In reality, combination of methods may be used according to condition of patients and judgment of physiotherapist. Moreover, the author should indicate and give rationale on research design and reason for choosing these three types of exercise. Also, implication for future use in clinical trials should be given.

Minor revisions

Abstract
Objectives:
1. Should delete the words in blankets: derivation phase and validation phase
2. The second objective should be “to validate a clinical prediction rule for the three forms of exercise therapy for patients with chronic non-specific LBP”

Background
1. The author is interested in these three forms of exercise for the treatment of chronic non-specific LBP. In my opinion, the Motor control exercise and Isometric training for lumbar trunk muscle are acceptable as a form of CNLB therapy but not for the general active exercise. Please give the rationale for using this intervention.
2. In the fourth paragraph: Please provide the meaning of the abbreviation “LR+” in the first use.
3. Figure 1 (it is a table not figure) should be deleted since readers can find those detail from the provided references.

Method/design
1. Study design: No need to mention too much on the third phase or impact analysis in the part of study design.
2. Intervention: No need to give the detail regarding another twelve sessions after nine weeks of intervention of RCT. It has no impact on the result.
3. Motor control therapy: Should deleted “…..” from the sentence. Please put the
name of the whole target muscles.
4. Please provide the references for the General active exercise and the Isomeric therapy.
5. Table 4:
   Please provide the meaning of “MCT”
Several names of exercise the author provided in your table is unclear, for example: Reverse lunge, Lat pull down, Low row, Front raise, Side raise, please rewrite or put another column to explain how to conduct the exercises.
Please indicate the use of Tergumed device for flexion/extension/rotation/later flexion in which part of body?

**Level of interest:** An article of importance in its field

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

**Statistical review:** Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.

**Declaration of competing interests:**
I declare that I have no competing interests'