Reviewer's report

Title: 'Choosing shoes'; the challenges for clinicians in assessing rheumatoid footwear: a preliminary study

Version: 2 Date: 29 June 2010

Reviewer: Simon Otter

Reviewer's report:

This is an interesting report which considers an aspect of practice which is pertinent to a number of health professionals, yet has received relatively little attention in the literature.

There are some minor amendments I wonder if the authors might address?

Background

A key aim was to look at factors influencing footwear choice. For me, this did not figure as strongly in the discussion as I might have expected

Method

Could the authors provide some more details on aspects of the footwear assessment to give readers more clarity?

Could a definition of the types of footwear be provided - perhaps in an appendix. I accept that in the discussion the term 'jandals' is explained, but this may be unfamiliar to many readers and needs explaining earlier.

Equally some readers may wish to know how the team differentiated between high heeled shoes and court shoes.

Finally, in terms of the 'good' footwear, was fit also considered? For instance, therapeutic footwear can only be considered as 'good' if it fits correctly.

Results

Foot impairment

I wonder if a little more detail could be provided here. Some readers may not be familiar with the LFIS & may need a little more guidance in interpreting the findings. Additionally, the FPI demonstrated a moderate to severe flatfoot - but in what proportion of participants?

Footwear assessment - typographical error 3rd sentence should probably read: 'No subjects' were and not 'No shoes were'

Discussion

Would the authors like to consider the point that while comfort was the most important factor for most subjects, the majority were wearing 'poor' shoes. This seems counter-intuitive & taken at face value perhaps there is a need to re-consider how footwear is classified: in that if 'poor' footwear is the most
comfortable, much footwear advice given by health professionals may need re-evaluating

In the limitations I would like to see some consideration given to the subjective nature of the Foot Structural Index

**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