Reviewer’s report

Title: Understanding the physical activity promotion behaviours of podiatrists: A qualitative study.

Version: 1 Date: 28 June 2013

Reviewer: Wesley Vernon

Reviewer’s report:

1. The paper is of interest to all podiatrists working clinically. It is also highly topical, particularly in the context of the drive for the public to adopt more healthy lifestyles and also in terms of podiatrists appreciating and demonstrating their wider role in the health care team.

2. The qualitative methods adopted by the authors are clearly described and in the main, the paper is well written and appropriately titled.

3. The authors have followed the approach required in the reporting of studies of a qualitative nature in their use of quotations to demonstrate points being made and where this has been done, the majority of these quotations are appropriate and illustrative.

4. One exception is apparent where the authors attempt to illustrate podiatrists range of beliefs towards their promotional effectiveness. Here the authors should re-visit the use of the quote concerned with a view to replacement or simple removal. (Minor Essential Revision)

5. The participant selection process is detailed well albeit with some apparently irrelevant detail being provided in relation to participant demographics, which I have recommended should be either explained further to help the reader understand relevance or preferably be reduced to a short summarising comment. (Minor Essential Revision)

6. The paper deviates from the usual conventions of qualitative reporting in that after “Methods”, the authors have reported the outcomes of their work separately under the headings of “Results” and “Discussions”. The usual convention in the reporting of qualitative work of combining data reporting with discussion as “Findings” should be used instead by the authors, who will need to re-write both these sections as “Findings”. The reporting of “Results” and current “Discussion” points does however cover everything required and a re-ordering to align each discussion point with the relevant data is the primary requirement as opposed to changing the points considered already considered. (Major Compulsory Revision)

7. Additionally, some of the data presented suggests that podiatrists being encouraged to undertake more physical activity promotion with their patients without supportive appropriate education and training programmes raises important governance issues (e.g. quotes page 11 “…Unless you’ve specifically trained in a particular area and have the skills and knowledge ……but for many
podiatrists they probably haven’t…. “…there’s always the fear of litigation…. ”).

The authors should consider these issues, the associated risk implications and potential mitigating actions (i.e. appropriate education and training) in their discussions, relating this to their data where appropriate. An appropriate recommendation could also be made by the authors in relation to this particular finding. (Major Compulsory Revision)

8. A few minor typographical errors are apparent, which the authors should re-visit. (Minor Essential Revision)

9. The attached document contains detailed comments on the authors work, which has been enjoyable to read and which will be of undoubted interest to readers.

**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