Author's response to reviews

Title: The Bangla clubfoot tool: a repeatability study.

Authors:

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Author's response to reviews: see over
21st February, 2014

Dr Alan Borthwick,
Deputy Editor,
Journal of Foot and Ankle Research

Dear Alan,

Re: MS: 1341847971108989
“The Bangla clubfoot tool: a repeatability study”
Angela M Evans, Roksana Perveen, Vikki A Ford-Powell and Simon Barker

Thank you for the reviewer’s comments of our manuscript. The recommended changes have been adopted as suggested within the revised version as re-submitted.

We would like to thank all of the reviewers for their very helpful input and the subsequent improvement of our manuscript.

Responses to specific points made by reviewers:

Reviewer 1: Kelly Gray
Thank you for these very helpful comments, and suggested amendments. I apologise for not being sufficiently clear in separating reliability from validity within this text, which both reviewers have identified. The amendment to the title, as suggested, has been made.

Major considerations:

- P4: the reference for the audit use of this tool is now included (Perveen et al).
- Appendix 1: thank you for making this point regarding motor development. The text has been corrected to read that this study looked at: “children who had commenced treatment for congenital clubfoot deformity using Ponseti method within the previous two years”. The further detail of the method clarifies the single step use, but this is a relevant point for future studies (and varying ages across cultures).
- Appendix 1/score: As now better clarified, this study addressed only the reliability of the tool, addressing the first fundamental part of measurement capacity. The need for further evaluation of both the tool and the scoring is now included in the discussion.
- Abstract/Results/line 2: thank you, this has now been clarified to read: “children who had commenced treatment for congenital clubfoot deformity using Ponseti method within the previous two years”.
- Methods: this section has been improved by adding the suggested details:
- inclusion (exclusion) criteria
- the reference to the subsequent study is now included (Perveen et al)
- the training and experience of the examiners is now included
- the date of data collection is now included
- the blinding of examiners is now included
- further specific details of the assessment are now included, as suggested

Minor considerations:

- the error for age (SD) in results has been corrected
- SD has been added, as suggested
- Normality testing for the data is now included
- Table 1: the parentheses is now corrected – a typo 9/(- same key, different function (well spotted, thank you)

Discretionary revisions

- The title has been amended as suggested, so that it is more clearly a repeatability study, and not a criterion validation.
- 37 children met the criteria at the clinic where the study was performed. (The subsequent study of 400 children addressed power and random sampling, whereas this study was evaluating the reliability of the tool/examiners). Further work is definitely needed to assess the intention of the measure/validity, with wider age groups (and post-treatment periods).
- I take your point re supination in gait vs static heel varus, reduced ankle range. The relationships of each need to be incorporated within a subsequent criterion based validation study.

Thank you very much for all of these insightful and helpful comments, and for improving the limitations of this study more clearly.

Please be assured that all comments have been very welcome, and willingly addressed. We have amended all points as possible and as suggested, and are amenable to further improvement as advised.

Reviewer 2: Paul Gibbons

Thank you for your helpful comments, most of which have been addressed in response to Reviewer 1. The manuscript has been amended to better clarify both is scope (repeatability) and its limitations regarding criterion validation.

Major considerations:

- As stated above, and within the responses to Reviewer 1, the manuscript has been amended to better clarify it as a repeatability study (specified within the title, onwards) and its limitations regarding criterion validation.
- Table 2: inter-rater parental sub-score will need to be further explored as this tool is further evaluated; as shown in Table 1 the discrepancy came from Rater 2's sub-
question about pain. It would seem premature to exclude the parental sub-score at this stage. Any further advice will be welcome.

Minor considerations:

- Abstract/Results/line 1: “been” has been deleted as suggested
- Results/sent 2: the mean age has been corrected to 2.6 years
- Results/ 2nd sent: Thank you, the text has been clarified to read: “children who had commenced treatment for congenital clubfoot deformity using Ponseti method within the previous two years”.
- Results/line 7: SD has been added to clarify the Pirani score, as suggested
- Discussion/ Line 12: Thank you, this now reads “correction”

Thank you once again for the helpful review and assistance with our manuscript. Please let me know if anything else might be required.

With very kind regards,

Yours sincerely,

Angela Evans.