Reviewer’s report

Title: Characteristics of Exercise Recommendations of Oncologists in South Korea: a cross sectional survey study

Version: 4 Date: 20 October 2014

Reviewer: Sandi Hayes

Reviewer’s report:

Below are comments that when addressed will improve quality of the submitted manuscript:

1. Is the question posed by the authors well defined?
   With minor amendments to the study purposes, the questions could be well-defined. For example, the purposes of this study were to evaluate/measure…. Use of the term ‘study’ is not helpful – how will you study this?

2. Are the methods appropriate and well described?
   This is a cross-sectional study. While most sections of the methods are adequately described, more detail would be useful for the statistical methods sections. Do you mean, ‘all normally distributed continuous data’ are described using means and standard deviations. Are all your continuous data normally distributed and if not, how will you describe it. How did you come to the physical activity categories used. Differences in what were analysed by one-way ANOVA. What practices of exercise recommendation – what do you mean by this. What is the power for this analysis? What level of differences between groups is considered clinically relevant – e.g., while the difference between 38% and 47% for ‘improve mental health’ met statistical significance, is the difference clinically relevant? Justifying how these data were compared would assist. For example, is it really about the perception that exercise has a particular benefit that would drive recommendations or is it possible that the more exercise benefit is perceived the more likely a doctor is to recommend it and if so, it would seem more important to evaluate recommendations (yes/no) by perceived benefits (0, 1, 2, …) either as a continuous variable or categorical data.

3. Are the data sound?

4. Do the figures appear to be genuine, i.e. without evidence of manipulation?

5. Does the manuscript adhere to the relevant standards for reporting and data deposition?
   The results presents the data as collected. Figures appear genuine without manipulation. However, the text simply repeats information in the figures and tables and does little to assist the reader in distilling the key findings from the work.

6. Are the discussion and conclusions well balanced and adequately supported by the data?
   The discussion is a repeat of the results section in part and needs to do more to
synthesise the key findings, to present these findings in light of study limitations and to interpret the clinical significance of these findings. While there is some attempt to draw meaning from some findings, a balanced view is lacking. E.g., ‘The results of the current study revealed that oncologists in Korea may underestimate the exercise ability of their cancer patients’. While this may be true, it may also be true that their report is more accurate than that presented in previously published findings (e.g., patients may be more likely to overreport their activity levels and there is likely a response bias in previous studies whereby the more active patient contributed data to the study).

7. Minor editorial errors throughout.

**Level of interest:** An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

**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