Reviewer’s report

Title: A cost-effectiveness study of ICT training among the visually impaired in the Netherlands

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Reviewer: Ahalaya Subramanian

Reviewer's report:

I enjoyed reading the paper which evaluates the cost effectiveness of ICT training in a small sample of people who are visually impaired.

I have the following major comments

1. The authors have not used a control group. They justify this decision by saying that this would have been unethical and impossible. I agree that this would be true if every individual receives ICT training. However, on Page 6 (line 3) the authors suggest that only individuals who were interested in ICT training were enrolled in the study. This would suggest that there were a group of individuals who were not interested in ICT training and could therefore form part of a control group. Why was this not considered?

2. Some information needs to be provided about subjects who did not complete the training during the study period and why this was the case as this has implications for costing. It is also not clear how many participants actually enrolled on the study and what the drop-out rate was and reasons for drop out (I note the authors mention health related or personal reasons). This also needs to be clarified as this provided important information which is relevant to the study as well.

3. The authors use questionnaires some of which are in Dutch and some of which are in English? It is not clear whether a mixture of languages were used or the English questionnaires were translated into Dutch. This should be made clear.

Some minor points

Abstract:

Line 4: 'costs and effects'- what do you mean by effects- this needs to be clarified
Line 7: More detail about participants is needed. How many participants took part in the study? What was their mean age?

Background:
Page 4 Line 3 & 4: Please use LogMAR notation

Methods:
Page 5: Line 21: What do you mean by the waiting time for enrolling in the training was limited?
Page 6 Line 7-12. Be explicit about what the first, second and last questionnaires are? It sounds like you only used one questionnaire where as in reality you used several questionnaires at each point in time. This section probably needs to be reworded to make it clear.

Results
Some information about the eye disease causing visual impairment would be useful. Include this information in table 1.
Page 11 Line 3 and 4: The domain 'security' also improved in line with 'enjoyment' and 'control'. Why was this not mentioned? It is mentioned on the previous page.
Page 12 Does the effect of ICT training persist? - Why was a one way ANOVA not carried out? Why use two separate t-tests?
Did you consider Bonferroni's adjustment as you have several t-tests?

Discussion
Some mention should be made about why difficulties with mobility increased after training? Also why does 'pain' and 'discomfort' decrease after ICT training?

Are the methods appropriate and well described?
If not, please specify what is required in your comments to the authors.

Yes

Does the work include the necessary controls?
If not, please specify which controls are required in your comments to the authors.

No
Are the conclusions drawn adequately supported by the data shown?
If not, please explain in your comments to the authors.
Yes

Are you able to assess any statistics in the manuscript or would you recommend an additional statistical review?
If an additional statistical review is recommended, please specify what aspects require further assessment in your comments to the editors.
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