Reviewer's report

Title: 'Walk This Way': Results from a pilot randomised controlled trial of a health coaching intervention to reduce sedentary behaviour and increase physical activity in people with serious mental illness

Version: 1 Date: 01 Mar 2019

Reviewer: Justin Chapman

Reviewer's report:

A nice write-up. The authors have gone through multiple reviews and the article is well-written. A couple minor suggestions:

- First sentence in the second paragraph of the intro could be made clearer with a comma or two, or breaking it up into two sentences.

- I know the protocol is published elsewhere, but just stating "biometric tests" (2.4 Procedure, first paragraph) seems a bit too vague for the Methods section.

- Similarly, the amount participants are reimbursed at each assessment point could be stated here (2nd paragraph)

- Clarification needed between 2.4 and 2.5: 2.4 states randomisation occurred after completion of baseline assessments (which would ensure concealed allocation), but in 2.5 it states researchers were blind to allocation at the time of assessments implying allocation may have been done prior. This doesn't necessarily break concealed allocation, but it raises additional questions about the randomisation method that have been left unclear in this article (e.g. if block randomisation was used researchers can potentially predict allocation, which has been shown to affect results in previous research).

- 2.8 Data management: is pseudoanonymised a term commonly used in your experience? I'm accustomed to "re-identifiable", but it could just be a difference in terms used locally (I'm located far from the motherland)

- 2.9 Analysis - some information about how the accelerometer data was analysed is needed here. What thresholds did the authors use? How did you define a valid day?

- In results section, it's a little strange to state the intervention group had a 'relative excess of men'… Suggest just stating that the proportion of men was significantly greater than in the control group if a statistical test was performed and stating the test statistic. If e.g. chi-square wasn't performed than this probably isn't worth mentioning.

- Table 1: It'd be beneficial to state sample sizes in the table. Also, the smoking status numbers don't add to 20 in either the intervention or control group…
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.

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