Reviewer’s report

Title: Pulmonary Rehabilitation after exacerbation of bronchiectasis: a pilot randomized controlled trial

Version: 0 Date: 08 Sep 2018

Reviewer: Andreas Rembert Koczulla

Reviewer's report:

Chalmers and co-authors presented the study "Pulmonary Rehabilitation after exacerbation of bronchiectasis: a pilot randomized controlled trial"

The study raised some fundamental questions.

1. What is the proposed number of patients that should be included in the study based on the power calculation? Was the power calculation adequate for the primary endpoint?

2. Please clarify the discrepancy between the power calculation of thousands of subjects which were needed to fulfill the power calculation and the result of 9 patients in the rehab group. Due to this numeric imbalance, it seems problematic to draw reliable conclusions from the detected results of this study.

3. Please explain the difference of number of subjects after randomization in the groups. A differential drop-out is not described.

4. You mentioned 2 times of training and 2 homework trainings- what was the participation rate of the patients in the pulmonary rehab group?

5. How did you control the home training was performed? Please provide the average training time duration for the patients.

6. Since rehab is more than training the title should be changed to pulmonary training after exacerbations.

7. Please provide blood gas analysis (pO2), LTOT supply, and heart insufficiency as comorbidity in regards of the characterization of the patients.

8. You refer to Greening and colleagues in regards to mortality of rehab.- the per protocol analysis of the study did not show a difference in mortality, suggesting that those who actually received the intervention were not those who came to harm. (Spruit et al. Eur Respir J. 2018 Jan 11;51(1).)
9. The 6 MWD difference in the groups is small. That raises again the question of the quality and frequency of the training participation. Please provide more data on training participation.

10. No drop-outs in the exacerbated patients- please comment.

11. How did you rule out training in the control group? Where there any differences - for example, in the weekly performed steps in the control group and training group? How do you explain the increase in 6 MWD in the control group?

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

No

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.

No

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.

I recommend additional statistical review

Quality of written English
Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

Acceptable

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