Reviewer's report

Title: Analgesic efficacy of cerebral and peripheral electrical stimulation in chronic nonspecific low back pain: a randomized, double-blind, factorial clinical trial.

Version: 1 Date: 3 December 2014

Reviewer: Ronald Glick

Reviewer's report:

Overall, well designed study and language and organization are for the most part excellent. No major critiques. Just 3 brief comments.

Line 232 severe impairment of backbone. This does not make sense to me. Often in nonspecific low back pain, there is no or minimal degenerative change on the osseous structures. I assume that you're referring to functional impairment related to the low back pain.

Line 324 power calculations based on a clinically important minimal difference of 10% reduction from baseline. This seems low and is often of the same magnitude that one will see by chance or as a function of time. Obviously, the authors have designed the study already, so I'm not suggesting that this calculation be changed, which would change the N of the study. However, it would be helpful to have rationale for using this #.

The exclusions, starting in line 177, seem excessive & ill defined. Do you intend to exclude any patient with mild hand OA, irritable bowel syndrome, both of which could be considered chronic pain syndromes. How will you assess disc herniation with nerve compression-are you getting imaging on everyone. I gather that you're planning to exclude subjects with primary leg or radicular pain rather than axial. Are you excluding anyone with mild comorbid anxiety or depression. It may be helpful to quantify what level of alcohol consumption would connote abuse or result in exclusion.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

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'