Reviewer’s report

Title: Internet based patient education improves informed consent for elective orthopaedic surgery: A randomized controlled trial.

Version: 3 Date: 26 November 2014

Reviewer: Tim Saier

Reviewer’s report:

“Internet based patient education improves informed consent for elective orthopaedic surgery: A randomized controlled trial” is an interesting to read manuscript on improving informed consent in orthopaedic surgery. Overall the manuscript is well written and the data presentation appears to be sound. Nevertheless there are some major revisions to be addressed before considering publication:

Title:
Nothing to add

Authors:
For the reviewer it seems uncommon to declare all authors to contribute equally. The reviewer is of the opinion, that only first and last authorship may be shared.

Abstract:
Background (lines 26-33): Please shorten
Methods (lines 35-44): Please be more precise
Conclusion (line 54): What does the authors mean with “properly designed website”

Background:
Lines 62-64, 64-67, 68-72, 72-74, 76-77, 93-95: Please proof with citations.
Please add a section on different approaches to obtain informed consent.
Line 92: The reviewer is of the opinion, that [5] is a not appropriate citation.
Lines 95-97: What is so special about the setting of your study?
Please add your question to be answered with this study and define your hypothesis(es), this is fundamental.

Methods:
Lines 125-127: Please proof with citation(s).

Lines 130-131: The reviewer appreciates your work, but would rather expect a more detailed description on the ratio behind the website, than the time it took to
complete the project. Please change.

Please provide information about financing the project.

Lines 134-144: Please provide your self-administered survey as a supplement.

The reviewer would like to know how much (extra) time it took to provide your patients the extra education (website).

Lines 162-165: What kind of test did the authors use for power-analysis?

Overall, please shorten Methods.

Results:
Nothing to add.

Discussion:
Lines 225-228: Are the authors able to proof this? Otherwise the reviewer feels this should be a hypothesis that has to be proofed.

Please include information on other approaches to improve informed consent and discuss these with your findings.

Conclusion:
Lines 240-242: The reviewer is of the opinion, that the authors missed to describe the criterias for a “properly designed website”. Please include a precise definition within the manuscript to fulfill this conclusion.

Lines 243-244: The reviewer feels not confided with this conclusion. There are many ways to improve informed consent, and web based education tools are one of them.

Competing interest:
The reviewer is not absolutely convinced about the declaration. Since several authors are obviously involved in the development of the website (besides there is no information about how this project was financed) it seems appropriate to name the authors that were involved in realizing “orthoanswer”.

Authors` contribution:
Who did actually write the manuscript?

References:
No comment

Figures & Tables:
No comment

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field
Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.

Declaration of competing interests:
'I declare that I have no competing interests'