Reviewer's report

**Title**: Rheumatoid Arthritis patients are not in a position to plan their near future. Intra-subject correlation in personal assessment of health levels over two month - Results of a survey

**Version**: 2
**Date**: 23 June 2014

**Reviewer**: Lindsay Bearne

**Reviewer's report:**

Thank you for asking me to review this manuscript which represents a considerable amount of work by the research team. There are a number of issues which the authors should address to improve the manuscript.

**Title** - This may benefit from being more succinct and representative of the primary research question

**Abstract** - the abstract would be enhanced by including more detail of the study methods and key results.

Try to avoid using vague (and possibly inaccurate terminology) e.g. p3 line 4 'holds true', line 7 'roughly')

**Background** - P4 Line 18. Could the authors substantiate the claim that combined PROs are not 'generally accepted'

P5 line 3 - This is an enormous list of research questions and the research (and the manuscript) would be improved if it is focussed on a primary research question. Some of the questions stated are more novel and interesting than others and you should be guided by the existing literature when choosing your primary research question.

As stated, it makes it difficult for the reader to determine exactly what the aim of the research is.

**Methods** -

A justification needs to be provided of how the proposed methodology answers the research question (s) e.g. why were interviews chosen at these intervals - would a longer duration of the study yield more pertinent results

A clear case needs to made for NOT using valid and reliable outcomes to answer your research question- particularly those which are widely used such as Pain visual analogue scales, RA QoL (quality of life) etc.

What are the psychometric properties of the questionnaire developed?

Please state the validation process and provide some details of the reliability of this questionnaire.
If the questionnaire has not been rigorously tested prior to the study the results are likely to be unreliable

P7 line 3 - details of the interview schedule and development of the topic guide should be provided in the methods section.

Justify the sampling for the interviews (why not interview a sub sample in detail and analyse thematically?)

Data analysis - P3 this should include how you analysed the qualitative data

Results and discussion

These sections need to be separated so that just the results are presented initially and then discussed in a separate section. Results should be presented clearly and with as much detail as possible e.g. some measure of variability included (P9 line 12 - mean 95% confidence interval?)

Details of the questions asked at interview need to go in the methods section and justification of measurement scales given

For the discussion section - this section should be used to discuss your results in relation to the existing literature and clinical practice however, justify all statements - please see p11 line 9

**Level of interest:** An article of limited interest

**Quality of written English:** Not suitable for publication unless extensively edited

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

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare I have no competing interests