Reviewer’s report

Title: Dry needling in a manual physiotherapy and therapeutic exercise protocol for patients with chronic mechanical shoulder pain of unspecific origin: a protocol for a randomized control trial

Version: 2 Date: 04 May 2017

Reviewer: Leica S Claydon

Reviewer's report:

Thank you for the response to the comments.

One or two outstanding points:

The minimal clinical important difference stated in the methods is now 1.4cm/14mm. Published studies of exercise alone are achieving reductions of 1.8cm reduction in pain at rest or 2.2cm pain on movement, if this clinically important difference is already exceeded with exercise alone why add manual therapy and dry needling?

The study is powered for a reduction in pain VAS this is the primary outcome. The DASH is secondary.

What participants are informed in each condition (placebo Dry Needling and Active Dry Needling) needs to be included in the manuscript.

The ANCOVA is a suggestion. It is possible to do a sensitivity analysis (do both ANOVA using difference scores and ANCOVA on raw scores with baseline scores as a covariate) to see the effect of different analyses on the results.

Thank you

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.

Yes
Are the conclusions drawn adequately supported by the data shown?
If not, please explain in your comments to the authors.

Yes

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 am able to assess the statistics

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

Acceptable

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