Reviewer’s report

Title: Change in physical activity level and clinical outcomes in older adults with knee pain: A secondary analysis from a randomised controlled trial

Version: 0 Date: 17 Dec 2017

Reviewer: Mary Barbe

Reviewer's report:

This is a well written and well designed study. The authors were careful to limit confounders in the methods, and then to describe limitations in the interpretations in the discussion. As a consequence, their findings are novel and of key importance to clinicians treated older patients with knee pain. They were careful to not overstep the statistical findings, such as on page 13, when they state that participants had a 2% increase in the odds of being able to be classified as a treatment responder during follow up at 3 months and 1% at 6 months, yet that the findings were not statistically significant since the 95% confidence interval odds ratios cross one. The challenges in modeling change in physical activity are presented with clarity. I particularly liked the statement that the change in pain or physical function may have occurred prior to any changes in physical activity.

I have no suggestions for increased clarity or discussion - to me, it was all quite evident, that assaying physical activity level in older adults is challenging using the current assays available.

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

Yes

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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