Reviewer’s report

Title: Effectiveness of physical therapy treatment in addition to usual podiatry management of plantar heel pain: A randomized clinical trial

Version: 0 Date: 25 Sep 2019

Reviewer: Marike van der Leeden

Reviewer's report:

General remark
Optimizing treatment for plantar heel pain, which is a highly prevalent condition, is of importance. This RCT studies the effect of physical therapy in addition to usual podiatry management in PHP.

Specific comments

Introduction
1. Rational: The authors write 'A local treatment approach for PHP works well and some studies estimate that 80-90% of individuals recover from the problem in 1 year (24-26)'. Can the authors be more specific on the natural course of PHP? What is the benefit of conservative treatment in accelerating recovery from PHP compared to the natural course of recovery?
2. Purpose: In the purpose of their study the authors write that they aim to examine the effects of interdisciplinary care for PHP. For care to be interdisciplinary the patients' goals and treatment aims must be coordinated between the both disciplines. In the intervention it is not clearly described whether this is the case. Please clarify.

Methods
The RCT was carried out in accordance with the CONSORT statement. Participants and therapists were not blinded, but the results were analyzed blindly.
3. Primary outcome measure: is the FAAM validated for people with PHP? Please add information on the validity of the FAAM specific for this patient population.
4. Treatment fidelity: how was it checked that the therapists were working according to the protocols?

Results
5. Reporting of results (table 3): It would give additional insight in the results to calculate and present between-group effect sizes for the outcomes measures used.

Discussion
6. High BMI is predictive factor in the development and maintenance of PHP as stated in the Discussion. Please explain why BMI is not a target of treatment.
7. As this is a pragmatic trial, it does not contribute to unraveling the mechanisms behind the success of treatment. More knowledge on mechanisms is needed to further optimize the effects of treatment and to select the right patient for the right intervention. Please elaborate on this topic in your Discussion.

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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