Author’s response to reviews

Title: Craniosacral Therapy for chronic pain: a systematic review and meta-analysis of randomized controlled trials

Authors:
Heidemarie Haller (h.haller@kem-med.com)
Romy Lauche (Romy.Lauche@sozialstiftung-bamberg.de)
Tobias Sundberg (tobias.sundberg@ki.se)
Gusatv Dobos (g.dobos@kem-med.com)
Holger Cramer (h.cramer@kem-med.com)

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Author’s response to reviews:

Dear Dr. Fitzpatrick:

Thank you very much for your comments and the opportunity to revise our manuscript titled “Craniosacral Therapy for chronic pain: a systematic review and meta-analysis of randomized controlled trials”. Language corrections were carried out by an English native speaker. All further changes within the manuscript are highlighted in grey. A point by point reply can be found below.

We still would be delighted to be considered for publication in BMC Musculoskeletal Disorders.

Yours sincerely.
Heidemarie Haller
On behalf of the authors.

Reply to the editor’s comments

Editor Comments:
Given the debate on CST recently, I request that you include a Section on the risks/dangers of CST, and discuss the (lack of) control groups in the studies used to make this sys review/meta-anal.

HH: Thank you for your valuable comments. They highly improved the manuscript in several sections. First, we reported the occurred AEs of the included RCTs in more detail (line 274-277). Second, we included further information about the safety of CST techniques from other literature (line 349-253). Unfortunately, we only found one systematic review that reported a serious AE of CST in a child with preexisting pathologies of the spine. As similar pathologies of the spine are common in adults with
chronic pain conditions, we extrapolate these results to adults. As the literature does not imply that CST is associated with more serious AEs that other conventional manual treatments, our final conclusion of the abstract/review did not change substantially.

HH: The advantages and disadvantages of the control groups used in the included RCTs are discussed in more detail in the sections “limitations” (line 330-336) and “Implications for further research” (line 339-343). We discussed the influence of treatment expectations, the credibility of control groups and the problem of placebo effects in waiting list and comparative effectiveness trials.

Thank you again for your effort while reviewing our manuscript.
Heidemarie Haller