Reviewer's report

Title: Effects of an eight-week supervised, structured lifestyle modification programme on anthropometric, metabolic and cardiovascular risk factors in severely obese adults.

Version: 1 Date: 3 March 2015

Reviewer: Lillian Kent

Reviewer's report:

I suggest a few compulsory revisions which are not major but exceed the category of minor.

1. Define terminology at first use. e.g. BMI, METS, LDL etc in Abstract and EQVAS, HDL etc in Methods sections. Once these are defined there is not need to redefine acronyms under Table

2. Your objective is two phase. It should just focus on the current programme/intervention and not include future scope for an RCT.

3. Can you please give more detail on the intervention/programme, particularly how it was structured. Please be consistent with terminology. I would prefer if you stuck with intervention or programme but not chop and change between the two.

4. The individualised goal setting and motivational interviewing mentioned in paragraph 2 of the Methods is unclear. Did this only occur during the initial assessment? To what degree did motivational interviewing occur during the initial assessment i.e. did the participants have to be convinced to enter the intervention?

5. Please show N (sample size) for each variable in the Table. Otherwise the data seems to be sound.

6. Data on medication is presented in Table 1, but there is no mention of collecting this in the Methods sections or how this data was collected. Further to the issue of medications, the end of the results sections states that changes in medication usage were minimised to the greatest extent possible. What does this mean, how was it done? Isn't one of the benefits of lifestyle programmes the decrease in medication usage as a result in decrease in risk factors?

7. Also in Table 1, 3 asterisk denotes 'subgroup not meeting specific lipid subtype target at baseline'. These targets are not specified anywhere in the document - what are they?

8. In paragraph 1 of the Discussion section, reference 17 is cited for its comparable high retention rate to the current study, but in paragraph 2 of the Background section, this reference is cited for its low retention rate. There is disparity here. Otherwise the Discussion and Conclusions are well balanced and adequately supported by the data and the limitations of the work are clearly stated.
9. The authors building on previous work to justify this study.
10. The title and abstract accurately convey what has been found?

**Level of interest:** An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

**Statistical review:** No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I report no competing interests.