Reviewer’s report

Title: Tracking physical activity using smart phone apps: Assessing the ability of a current app and systematically collecting patient recommendations for future development

Version: 1 Date: 18 Oct 2019

Reviewer: Huong Ly Tong

Reviewer's report:

General comment: I appreciate that the authors have responded to previous comments made by Reviewers 1 and 2. The paper is well structured with clear sections and subheadings. The authors have addressed and/or discussed most of the limitations of the study. However, the methods section requires a bit more work, as well as the discussion. Please find below my specific comments that could help improve the paper.

1. Methods: While more details have been provided about the intervention and the participant, there should be a separate section called Data analysis. At the moment, specific information about Data analysis is included in the Results. For example, page 15, line 340 - 46 "Assessing the relationship between physical activity and other health related variables" - information about data analysis should be in the methods. Similarly, page 16, line 370 - 73, "Identifying the facilitators and barriers to the apps use", the first 4 sentences of that section should be in the methods as well.

I suggest that the authors included a section called Data analysis, after the Measures section, and detailed the analysis for each of the outcome proposed in the measures section.

2. Methods: While it is great that the authors have provided description of the intervention, as well as the associated Behaviour Change Techniques, the authors could also consider including screenshots or screen-capture video (per CONSORT-EHEALTH checklist), either as part of the methods, or as an Appendix, to enable readers to understand the look and feel of the apps better, as well as to enhance replicability.

3. Discussion: The intervention is composed of 2 different apps (Moves, WLCompanion). Previous research has shown that users would prefer and would be more engaged if they only have 1 app/1 central system to view all their health-related data and engage in different functions (as opposed to going to 2 different apps, each app offers different things). Perhaps this could be part of the reasons for the high attrition observed. It would be good if the authors can briefly discuss the implications of having 2 apps as the interventions, and how that could potentially impact user engagement level (for eg., in the first paragraph of Principle findings where the authors discussed the use of the app).

4. Abstract: A minor point regarding the Background. The abstract said "remotely monitoring patients' physical activity and other health-related variables may enable practitioners to offer patients further support in real time" (page 2, lines 52 - 54). This sentence doesn't seem to align with the rest of the article, or the aim of the study. Specifically, the manuscript did not discuss how practitioners used the
patients' data to offer real-time support at all - not in the introduction, intervention description, or discussion. Hence, I suggest that this sentence be reworded slightly to better align with the rest of the article.

**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:

Needs some language corrections before being published
Declaration of competing interests
Please complete a declaration of competing interests, considering the following questions:

1. Have you in the past five years received reimbursements, fees, funding, or salary from an organisation that may in any way gain or lose financially from the publication of this manuscript, either now or in the future?

2. Do you hold any stocks or shares in an organisation that may in any way gain or lose financially from the publication of this manuscript, either now or in the future?

3. Do you hold or are you currently applying for any patents relating to the content of the manuscript?

4. Have you received reimbursements, fees, funding, or salary from an organization that holds or has applied for patents relating to the content of the manuscript?

5. Do you have any other financial competing interests?

6. Do you have any non-financial competing interests in relation to this paper?

If you can answer no to all of the above, write 'I declare that I have no competing interests' below. If your reply is yes to any, please give details below.

I declare that I have no competing interests.

I agree to the open peer review policy of the journal. I understand that my name will be included on my report to the authors and, if the manuscript is accepted for publication, my named report including any attachments I upload will be posted on the website along with the authors' responses. I agree for my report to be made available under an Open Access Creative Commons CC-BY license (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/). I understand that any comments which I do not wish to be included in my named report can be included as confidential comments to the editors, which will not be published.

I agree to the open peer review policy of the journal