**Reviewer’s report**

**Title:** Surgical offloading procedures for diabetic foot ulcers compared to best non-surgical treatment: A study protocol for a randomized controlled trial

**Version:** 0  **Date:** 06 Dec 2017

**Reviewer:** Stephanie Messner

**Reviewer's report:**

Thank you for the opportunity to review this manuscript and thank you to the authors for submitting this interesting piece of work. I found this protocol a pertinent topic within the area of Diabetic foot ulcer management, where there remains a lack of high-quality research. I am hoping the authors find my comments useful in aid of the amelioration of the current proposed protocol.

Abstract

Page 3

Line 31 - The authors refer to a "crossover designed RCT". Could the authors confirm whether they are simply referring to the participant being offered alternative treatment after failure to heal in group 2. OR. Are the authors leaning towards a "crossover trial", as the setup of the current protocol is not deemed a classic crossover trial or any derivative of the classic: 2-sequence, 2-period, 2-treatment.

Background

Page 6

Line 47 - "usually healing" = this statement is vague

Page 7

Line 10 - "their" avoid personal determiner

Methods

Page 7
Line 18-36 - is one long sentence. This should be broken up for ease of read.

Line 39 - "their" avoid personal determiner

Line 57 - "their" avoid personal determiner

Line 60 - could authors clarify the following "5.07/10 gram"

Page 8

Line 21-24 - "full length, padded, removable walking boot or a calcaneal healing shoe" do the authors have specific brands and models in mind and a justification for choice?

Line 26 - "questionnaire detailing various activities....." it is not clear whether this is filled during follow up sessions or the patient is required to do this daily. If indeed patients are filling this in by themselves how will, compliance be attained.

Line 42 - "crossover" again careful use of the term depending on previous comment about study design above.

Line 47 - "follow up takes place at weeks 1, 2, 4 and 6" after surgery and weekly for 6-12 weeks for non- surgical. Then Line 52 it talks about "follow up at weeks 3, 6, 12, 18 & 24". Could the authors clarify the repetition of "3, 6 and 12".

Page 9

Line 17 - "understand Hebrew or English well enough to give consent" this sentence needs revising as It doesn't say what you intend it to say.

Page 11

Line 5 - "DIP" define

Line 25 - "patients with neuropathy severe enough to make anaesthesia unnecessary" how will this be assessed and classified. For clarity of the reader.

Page 14

Line 13 - "From previous studies" it would be of value to add some references at this point.
Line 44 - "infested" perhaps change to "manifested"

Line 47 - "their" avoid personal determiner

Line 49 - avoid "because"

Line 49 - "most patients will not develop ulcers" this could do with some evidence hence a reference.

Page 15

Line 24 - "The high success rates ………dismal outlook of recurrence and complications………seem reasonable" include a reference.

Page 16

Line 21 - "their" avoid personal determiner.

Level of interest
Please indicate how interesting you found the manuscript:

An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English
Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

Acceptable

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