Reviewer’s report

Title: Commitment devices in the treatment of diabetic foot ulcers

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Reviewer: Jaap van Netten

Reviewer's report:

With pleasure have I read and reviewed the commentary on commitment devices. With JFAR's open peer review policy, I'm happy to declare that I've already complimented the author with this philosophical approach during a conference, and it's nice to see this in print for all to read.

Having said this, there are two points I'd like to raise for the author to reflect on:

First there's the difference between devices for healing and devices for prevention. Nonremovable devices are currently only recommended for ulcer healing. I think the commentary can improve on clarity by only focusing on this process. The writing now goes back and forth between healing and prevention devices. However, healing is generally a shorter process, while prevention devices are "for life". I think the discussion on commitment devices and improving adherence should only focus on healing devices. At the end of the commentary, a short discussion can then be added that an improved adherence to a healing device thanks to this communication might carry forward to a prevention device. However, that's probably as far as I would go regarding the latter.

Second, I wonder about the working mechanism if starting to discuss devices as commitment devices indeed improves adherence. It might be the specific context related to the commitment device, as eloquently explained by the author. However, it could perhaps also be the result of improved communication, irrespective of the content. Because in my opinion, communication about offloading treatment and treatment decisions is generally rather short, and any improvement may increase adherence. I think the commentary can be strengthened if the author would add some short reflection on this. There is an enormous body on general patient-clinician communication and potential positive outcomes thereof, but directly related to our field specifically, the only paper I'm aware of is a commentary we wrote two years ago discussing communication as a method to improve footwear adherence (Van Netten et al, 2017 Prosthetics Orthotics Int). I'll leave it to the author to consider if some reflections on this can be added as a discussion on a potential working mechanism.

One minor point: the Beattie et al qualitative study is referenced. Perhaps consider to check the nice meta-synthesis by Coffey and colleagues, as I'm sure that one contains multiple examples relevant for this paper, also from other qualitative studies.

In all, I've enjoyed reading this commentary, and look forward to seeing this in print after some minor revisions.

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