Reviewer’s report

Title: Spray on skin for diabetic foot ulcers: an open label randomised controlled trial

Version: 0 Date: 29 Sep 2019

Reviewer: Anabelle Mizzi

Reviewer's report:

This paper explains the design and process of a randomised controlled trial aimed to assess the efficacy of a novel method of treatment for DFUs. The topic is highly relevant and important in the field and I look forward to see their results. The paper is very well written and may need some minor clarifications regarding the randomisation and recruitment (inclusion criteria) process.

Abstract

Line 34: change 150 to One hundred and fifty

Study population

This section needs to be more clear. Will the participants be recruited immediately after diagnosis of DFU? Will you be recruiting participants who have had the DFU for several weeks?

How will randomization take place? Will the researchers be blind for randomization? Will the 150 participants be split into 2 groups following randomization? That is, each group will have 75 participants?

Line 120: Define 'suitable' for spray on skin. May be a source of bias here or else perhaps state earlier on that spray on skin is suitable only on ulcers with specific criteria. Will the other group have the same criteria as it is not clear since the inclusion criteria state 'suitability for spray on skin' only.

Line 125: do you mean Duplex instead of Doppler?
Line 136: how will this be determined? May also be a source of bias since sometimes weaker/ frail patients find it more difficult to attend.

Line 177: Perhaps this section needs some more info similar to what is presented for the participants who will be receiving the spray on skin treatment. EG: will they have the same wound bed preparation? What is 'standard podiatry treatment'? Will these patients also be treated by VAC?

Discussion
Line 322: Write WA in full

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

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