Author's response to reviews

Title: STICKS Study - Short-sTretch Inelastic Compression bandage in Knee Swelling following total knee arthroplasty - Study Protocol for a Randomised Controlled Feasibility Study

Authors:

Timothy M Brock (t.m.brock@doctors.org.uk)
Andrew P Sprowson (Andrew.Sprowson@nhs.net)
Scott Muller (Scott.Muller@nhct.nhs.uk)
Mike R Reed (mike.reed@nhs.net)

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Author's response to reviews: see over
Dear Trials Journal,

Please thank your reviewer for his hard work in reviewing our study protocol. The comments have been helpful in the development of the manuscript. Please find attached a revised manuscript that has addressed the outstanding points made in the report on 12th January 2015.

Minor revisions

"The compression bandage technique is for application after release of the tourniquet, and for the conventional wool and crepe dressing for application before release of the tourniquet. This represents a potential confounding factor in favour of the wool and crepe group. Given that recruitment has now finished, it will not be possible to change this, but it should be mentioned as such in the discussion.

An alternative would be to apply the portion of the compression bandage below the tourniquet prior to tourniquet release, and then the remainder after. This would make the two groups more comparable. This could be considered for the full study."

In response to this – the bandage was applied up to the tourniquet and then the leg elevated, tourniquet released and final proximal bandaging completed, as suggested by your reviewer. We appreciate this is vague in the manuscript and appreciate the comments. This has therefore been amended page 10, lines 9-11.

Editorial requests

1. Separate figures now uploaded
2. Figure title added after reference list

We look forward to your response

Kind regards

Tim Brock
Scott Muller
Andrew Sprowson
Mike Reed