Reviewer’s report

Title: The effect of massage therapy and/or exercise therapy on subacute or long lasting neck pain - a study protocol for the Stockholm Neck trial (STONE) - a Randomized Controlled Trial

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Reviewer: Amelia P Marques

Reviewer’s report:

The manuscript is interesting but have some mistakes

The hypothesis of the study do reference to the effect of massage and exercise in low back pain. I suggest to focus in neck pain.

At some moments the authors state that the sample consists of 600 patients and others who are approximately 600. What is the correct sample number?

The inclusion criteria for participants are to amplos: neck pain with headache and/or radiating symptoms in the upper limbs) of subacute (30-90 days duration) or long lasting (>90 days duration) duration and in this case amostra poderá ser muito diferente. Patients with age range between 18-70 years are very different and can affecting the results.

It is important to have some imaging exam and to verify if the patients have herniation disc. It is also important to verify the cervical spine curvature.

The primary outcomes: pain and disability. Why not range of motion?

It is important to describe how they are evaluated trigger points?

Six sessions is very short considering the intensity and the persistence of symptoms

The groups have different number of sessions. I suggest using the same number for all groups