Reviewer’s report

Title: Face-to-face individual counseling and online group motivational interviewing in improving oral health: study protocol for a randomized controlled trial

Version: 3
Date: 18 August 2015

Reviewer: Falk Schwendicke

Reviewer’s report:

Minor revision:

Abstract
- Outcome definition early on in the abstract, remains unclear which is the primary
- outcome – clarify right at the beginning!
- pls revise: outcome measures (GBI etc) are not outcomes

Introduction
- again, when stating aims of the study, name primary outcomes first (before behaviors)
- the null hypothesis should be concerned with the primary outcome and should essentially be testable – currently not the case

Methods
- there can only be one primary outcome – the one you base sample size calculation on
- sample size calculation: I agree with the other reviewer - where does 0.4 as effect estimate come from? Is this wishful thinking? Have you any data from pilots to base this on? If not so, why not choose and adaptive sample size estimation instead? In minimum, this need discussion later on!
- outcome measures – again, discriminate outcomes and outcomes measures
- it remains unclear how ICDAS will translate into caries increment – ICDAS 5 increments might need different weighing than ICDAS 2 increments?

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

Declaration of competing interests:
I declare that I have no competing interests