Reviewer’s report

Title: Effects of high-frequency Transcranial Magnetic Stimulation on functional performance in participants with incomplete spinal cord injury: study protocol for a randomized controlled trial

Version: 0 Date: 09 Sep 2017

Reviewer: Dimitrios Rikos

Reviewer’s report:

The manuscript presents a research protocol of a double-blind randomized sham-controlled crossover trial of patients with iSCI.

The protocol is interesting and overall well-presented. A few remarks are as follow:

- As you state on the Background section the cited trials (ref 14, 15 and 23) had inconsistent results. This is a sufficient rational for this trial. On the other hand the study design differences between references 14, 15 and 23 and this trial are not clear enough (as a rationale). (lines 116 to 122)

- This article cannot be CONSORT compliant since it is not an RCT but a protocol. You should consider removing the corresponding comment on lines 129-130 of the manuscript

- The same stands for the legend of figure 1. This is a study flowchart but not a "CONSORT flowchart" which, according to the 2010 CONSORT Explanation and Elaboration document should include numbers of randomized patients; dropouts etc.

- The WHO Trial Registration Data Set currently has 20 items which are addressed in the manuscript but not only on pages 2 and 6 as the additional file (SPIRIT checklist) states. Furthermore the SPIRIT Explanation and Elaboration document recommends the WHO TRDS to be included (as a table) in the protocol to serve as a brief structured summary of the trial.

- On lines 140-141 you state that "specific details about enrollment, interventions, and assessments can be found in the SPIRIT checklist". The additional file of the SPIRIT checklist cite the pages of the manuscript that corresponds to each checklist item and no additional file

- In the Primary Outcomes section the Analysis metric is not clear. Is it going to be a "change from baseline" value?

- Is the statistical analysis going to be in a "intent to treat" or "per protocol" basis?

Level of interest

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