Reviewer's report

Title: Targeted Interventions to Prevent Chronic Low Back Pain in High Risk Patients: Development and Delivery of a Pragmatic Training Course of Psychologically Informed Physical Therapy for the TARGET Trial

Version: 0 Date: 07 Jan 2019

Reviewer: Jonathan Hill

Reviewer's report:

The authors aim is to describe the iterative process involved in developing teaching material for the TARGET trial called Psychologically Informed Physical Therapy. It is an ambitious paper that covers a huge amount of material but it is important paper and I believe it should be published to ensure this detail is available to others.

The results of the trial are eagerly awaited by the back pain clinical and research community.

The strengths of the paper

- the writing style is clear. References are appropriate. The team are excellent. The topic is important.

- the links to the trial website and to the course modules are useful and interesting

- the size of participants completing the course and providing data was large

- the discussion points were well structured and interesting

The weaknesses of the paper (all relatively minor points)

- it is a fairly complex and lengthy article to read. Perhaps the introduction could be edited by omitting the first couple of paragraphs on information about LBP prevalence etc... as that could be the start of any LBP related paper and so is not strictly needed.

- the usefulness of details about the iterative steps to improving the training content was unclear - perhaps that section could be reduced in length?

- on the PIPT website link you can see that there is a presentation in the research section on the PABS measure. Some clarity to avoid it looking like participants were coached to take the test - would be useful.
- the detail of the content within Table 1 and 2 was very limited. Could the authors consider adding more information to both of these Tables? For example, Table 1 point 5 - can you tell us which CBT assumptions and specific skills? For example, in Table 2 could you detail a little more about the content and add the time spent on the delivery?

I wish the authors all the best with their clinical trial.

**Level of interest**
Please indicate how interesting you found the manuscript:

- An article of importance in its field

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Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

- Acceptable

**Quality of figures**

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**Statistical review**

Is it essential that this manuscript is seen by an expert statistician? If so, please give your reasons in your report.
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I have received research funding relating to the STarT Back Tool which is part of the content mentioned within this paper.

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