Reviewer’s report

Title: Identifying important barriers to recruitment of patients in randomised clinical studies using a questionnaire for study personnel

Version: 0 Date: 08 Jul 2019

Reviewer: Karen Innes

Reviewer's report:

Congratulations to the authors, this is an interesting article and it is could to see this type of research written for publication. Overall the message in the paper is clear and with some minor revisions will be ready to go. the research team should be commended for such a high update of study personnel completing the WIMSS-q.

Abstract - no issues

Trial registration (page 3) - pleased to see that this SWAT is registered on the SWAT repository

Introduction - (Page 3) line 40/41 consider the use of 'WILL' prolong the trial - would this be applicable in all cases? Perhaps could be replaced with MAY

Introduction - (Page 3) line 55 - The authors mention the previous work by Kaur et al and I was left looking for some justification as to how this research is different or similar. Perhaps anther paragraph with this information.

Methods - (Page 4) line 26 no 's' on the end of systematic the authors should be congratulated on the development of the questionnaire. to make it clearer to the reader I suggest the you could give the questionnaires version number - for example the pilot questionnaire could be version 1 and the final questionnaire could be version 2. Consent - not sure I am clear on the consent process for this questionnaire study?

I am curious about if the pilot study and the main study used the same group of participants - I cant find this information in the text.

Observation - lots of reminders were sent to participants to obtain responses - was this level of reminders details in the approvals?

Results - Observation - large sample from Stroke Unit (84%) and classing themselves as very inexperienced in clinical trials (66%). I appreciate that this is identified as a limitation further along the paper. (Page 12) line 42 - 'Weakly' should be 'Weekly'

Discussion - page 13 line 15 - Is it true that all studies would have a dedicated research nurse? This
may be true to the host trial that this group of people work in but not all studies
Page 13 line 37 - Donovan et al - how does the research by this team relate to the authors research - make this clearer
Page 14 line 14 consider changing the MUST it would be ideal but this is not always possible
Page 14 lines 19 - 26 what are the authors trying to say in this paragraph - I think this needs reworded and the point made clearer
Page 14 line 26 What are the several promising methods - the ones already discussed or others - this needs to made clearer
Page 14 line 41 - 56 - consider rewording this paragraph to make a stronger point
Good limitations section

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

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Quality of written English
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