Author’s response to reviews

Title: Relaxation and Exercise In Lymphoma survivors (REIL study): a randomised clinical trial protocol

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Author’s response to reviews:

Re: Manuscript No. SSMR-D-18-00076 “Relaxation and Exercise in Lymphoma survivors (REIL study): a randomised clinical trial protocol.”

Regarding the above manuscript, please find below point-by-point response to reviewers’ comments.

REVIEWER 1:

Abstract: The conclusion has been revised to fit the scope of the proposed study.

Background:

1. Introduction has been revised to focus more on study population, lymphoma survivors.

2. We have stated that both relaxation and exercise interventions have a positive impact on physical and psychosocial symptoms, as well as overall quality of life. References have been provided to give specific examples of studies in the literature.

3. The point about appropriate control groups has not been revised.

4. The term ‘holistic assessment’ has been removed, as this is not within the scope of the proposed study.

5. This paragraph has been revised to within the scope of the study as suggested – to investigate preliminary efficacy.
Methods:

6. Stratification during randomisation is now addressed in the discussion, on Page 14, paragraph 3.

7. Paragraph on who will be teaching interventions has been moved to before the description of interventions.

8. This point is addressed in the discussion on Page 14, paragraph 2.

9. Body composition device and measurements have been clarified as requested.

10. The FACT-Lym is a questionnaire designed to measure quality of life, but various domains of well-being in particular. The language used in this questionnaire includes physical, social, emotional and functional well-being. These constructs have been clarified as requested.

11. Analyses - seem appropriate.

Discussion:

12. The term ‘whole-person approach’ has been removed.

13. This statement has been removed, and the self-management approach has been highlighted.

14. This has been revised to reflect the scope of the proposed study.

15. The conclusion has been revised to focus on lymphoma survivors, the population examined by the proposed study.

16. How interventions may lead to improvements is covered in the introduction, Page 4 paragraph 1. Study power and social benefits of group training are discussed on Page 14, paragraphs 2 and 3.

REVIEWER 2:

Background: Literature review and references have been updated.

Methods: Reasoning behind developing a twelve week programme is discussed on Page 9, line 1. Midway assessment is discussed on Page 9, paragraph 2.

Methods: Inclusion criteria within six weeks of last chemotherapy is discussed on Page 14, paragraph 1. 6 has been revised to ‘six’ throughout the manuscript.
Methods: The EORTC QLQ-C30 and FACT-Lym questionnaires are generally accepted as valid and reliable patient-reported outcome measures, and widely used in studies in the field of cancer survivorship. Actual values of validity and reliability are not often stated. Both these questionnaires comprise different domains and subscales, and each of these have been analysed and each have different values for validity and reliability.

Data Analysis: Analysis has been clarified, ANCOVA using baseline as covariate will be used. Correlation with age, gender, ECOG status and number of co-morbidities will be analysed.

The revised manuscript has been uploaded as requested, with revisions highlighted.