Author’s response to reviews

Title: Effects of dance on cognitive function among older adults: a protocol for systematic review and meta-analysis

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Canada, November 29, 2017

Dr. Zbys Fedorowicz
Editor, BMC Systematic Reviews
RE: Effects of dance on cognitive function among older adults: a protocol for a systematic review and meta-analysis (SYSR-D-17-00280).

Dear Editor,

Thank you and the reviewer for the comments/suggestions regarding the systematic review and meta-analysis protocol on the “Effects of dance on cognitive function among older adults” (SYSR-D-17-00280). Please see our responses below.

We have revised the manuscript according to reviewer suggestions. We hope you will consider the revised version for publication.

Should you have any question please let us know. Thank you so much.
Yours truly,
On behalf of the team
ASM Borhan

Reviewer reports:

Reviewer #1: Dear authors,

I write this review on your submitted protocol as a patient advocate and a consumer on Cochrane SRs.

Thank you for submitting a revised manuscript in which previous comments have been addressed. It is much appreciated. I have three comments.

Team:

I would encourage including a patient representative on the review team. As patients, or their carers/representatives, are well organised in the field of cognitive functioning, this should be feasible.

Response: Thank you for this suggestion. Yes, we have approached patient community stakeholders.

Prospero:

The previous manuscript mentions the Prospero ID CRD4201705147. This manuscript mentions CRD42017057138. But searching Google on CRD42017057138 yields no results. When searching on the protocol title in the Prospero-database, not CRD42017057138 is found but CRD4201705147. When searching Prospero on CRD42017057138, it is found though. They (147 and 138) both seem the same (with a revision). But maybe you can have a look at that, as this is a bit confusing.

Response: Thank you for your comment. PROSPERO ID CRD42017057138 is related to this study i.e. Systematic review and meta-analysis on the effects of dance on cognitive function among older adults based on Randomized Controlled Trials (RCTs). On the other hand, PROSPERO ID CRD4201705147 is proposed for systematic review and meta-analysis based on observational studies. We also googled it with CRD42017057138 and it yielded no results. We don’t know the reason for that. On PROSPERO, we typed the title without the colon (:) and found this protocol.

Outcomes:
My major concern is regarding the outcomes, or rather, the lack of specificity thereof. They are listed very generically, which could lead to selective outcome reporting. I would strongly encourage the authors to adhere to MECIR standards regarding selecting outcomes. This means to predefine at protocol stage primary and secondary outcome domains and outcome measures, to select outcomes that are important to the stakeholders and that at least one primary outcome is about benefit for patients and one on potential harms. Also up to seven outcomes should be identified for GRADE assessment.


Response: Thank you so much for your suggestion. We have revised the protocol with the following section “Outcome and measurement” (page 6) as recommended by reviewer. For measurement of the outcomes, we will consider all the tools used to measure these outcomes in the included studies, since different tools may be used to measure these outcomes.

Outcome and measurement

The primary outcome of interest for this review is cognitive function. More specifically, the executive function domain, such as task switching, response inhibition.

We will consider other domains such as processing speed, reaction time, verbal and visuospatial learning ability, working memory, and immediate and delayed memory.

The secondary outcome of interest is physical function. In particular, the domain balance of physical function. Further, we will include other domains of physical function including walking speed. We also assess the effect on dance on adverse events, specifically fall, and quality of life.

Different tools may be used to measure these outcomes. We will consider all the tools used to measure these outcomes in the included studies.

I therefore would kindly advice that these comments could be addressed in a revision, especially the comment on outcomes, and wish the authors best of luck in doing so.

With kind regards,

Bernd Arents