Author's response to reviews

Title: A comparison of isometric, isotonic concentric and isotonic eccentric exercises in the physiotherapy management of subacromial pain syndrome/rotator cuff tendinopathy: study protocol for a pilot randomised controlled trial.

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Author’s response to reviews:
Cindy Gray, PhD
Associate Editor, Pilot and Feasibility Studies

September 12th 2017

Dear Dr Gray,

Re: PAFS-D-17-00006R1

“A comparison of isometric, isotonic concentric and isotonic eccentric exercises in the physiotherapy management of subacromial pain syndrome/rotator cuff tendinopathy: study protocol for a pilot randomised controlled trial.”

Rita Kinsella, BSc (Hons), MMACP; Sallie M Cowan, PhD, Grad Dip (Manip Physiotherapy); Lyn Watson, Grad Dip (Manip Physiotherapy); Tania Pizzari, PhD

Thank you for your further review of our manuscript. We have made the last few minor amendments and have thoroughly checked through the manuscript to ensure there are no other inadvertent grammatical or spelling errors. The following documents the changes we have made in response to your comments.

Comment 1 * Line 38: AE COMMENT: The reviewer was asking for text to be added to the abstract, not the background and aims section. I agree that the specific aim of the study needs clarified in the abstract. In addition, (ln43) you don’t need to repeat that this is a protocol for a feasibility study.
R2 AUTHOR RESPONSE: Thank you for this comment. The repetition in line 43 has been removed and the following text has now been added to the abstract: “The primary outcome measure will be feasibility which will involve evaluation of key study parameters including (a) ease of recruitment (rate and number as well as suitability of the assessment algorithm); (b) adherence to all phases of the exercise intervention including home program compliance and log-book completion, (c) participant non-completion (drop-out number and rate) and (d) adverse events (nature and number)”. Line 48-52.

AE RESPONSE. “The primary outcome will be feasibility.” Which is what is in the text, does not make sense and is not necessary. Please amend

R3 AUTHOR RESPONSE:

The sentence has been amended to:

“To determine feasibility, an evaluation of key study parameters.............will be undertaken”
Line 47-51

Comment 14 * AE COMMENT Ln 265-311 The Secondary outcomes here are not presented in the same way as they are in the abstract. This still needs to be sorted.

R3 AUTHOR RESPONSE:

The secondary outcomes are now presented in the same way (within the confines of the abstract word count) in the abstract as they are in the main text:

“Secondary outcomes will measure immediate effects: (i) within-treatment changes in pain perception (verbal rating scale (VRS) and shoulder muscle strength (hand-held dynamometer) and longer term changes: (ii) shoulder related symptoms and disability (Western Ontario Rotator Cuff Index (WORC) and Shoulder Pain and Disability Index (SPADI)); (iii) perception of pain (11-point numerical rating scale (NRS)); (iv) shoulder muscle strength (hand hand-held dynamometer); (v) perceived global rating of change score. The immediate within-treatment assessment of pain and muscle strength will be undertaken in treatments 2 and 3 and the longer term measures will be collected at the primary (conclusion of Phase 1 at 6 weeks) and secondary (conclusion of Phase 2 at 12 weeks) end-points of the study.”

Line 51-59

AE COMMENT Are Figures 3 and 4 in the wrong order?

R2 AUTHOR RESPONSE:

Thank you for pointing this out – now corrected.

AE RESPONSE the legends for the Figures are still wrong
R3 AUTHOR RESPONSE:

Apologies, now definitely corrected.

Comment 18* Line 305 R2 AUTHOR RESPONSE: Thank you for this comment. The authors agree that as the numbers are low, the use of ITT and LSCF are likely to influence the findings. The text has now been amended to reflect that ANOVA as per protocol will be used as well as the addition of post-hoc analyses using Tukey’s test. “Analyses of variance (ANOVA) with repeated measures will be undertaken to analyse trends in between-group changes in secondary outcome scores with post-hoc analyses using Tukey’s HSD test performed where significant between group differences are observed.” Line 383-385

AE RESPONSE: Where does it says per-protocol?

R3 AUTHOR RESPONSE:

Text amended to include as follows:

“All data will be analysed as per-protocol.”

Line 385

Additional very minor comments:

Background and aims ln 72 SPS should be spelled out in full the first time it is mentioned in the main body of the manuscript. Likewise RCT, NRS etc.

R3 AUTHOR RESPONSE:

Thank you – I have made sure this has been done for the main manuscript also for those and other similar terms.

Figure 2 not Fig 2 (Line 197-198, and ln 238)

R3 AUTHOR RESPONSE:

Thank you – now amended.

Method: ln 199 “following this they will be randomised … -“ is this sentence needed as it is repeated in the next paragraph, ln204-05

R3 AUTHOR RESPONSE:

Thank you – now removed.

Ln 226 I don’t think you need “As outlined above”
R3 AUTHOR RESPONSE:

Thank you – now removed.

Finally, please have a final read through to check placement of commas, and font sizes.

R3 AUTHOR RESPONSE:

Text fully checked against BMC author guidelines to ensure correct font and other related aspects.

Thank you again for your thorough review of our manuscript. We appreciate the time you have taken and the advice you have provided.

We very much hope that you will be amenable to the amendments we have made. We look forward to hearing from you in due course and hope that our manuscript is now acceptable for publication in BMC Pilot and Feasibility Trials.

Yours sincerely,

Rita Kinsella.