Reviewer's report

Title: Lee Silverman Voice Treatment versus standard speech and language therapy versus control in Parkinson's disease: a pilot randomised controlled trial (PD COMM pilot)

Version: 0 Date: 10 Mar 2017

Reviewer: Mihaela Boca

Reviewer's report:

This randomised controlled three-arm pilot trial of speech therapy vs control in PD patients paves the way to addressing an unmet need of establishing appropriate evidence-based speech interventions. The protocol follows MRC guidance for complex interventions by incorporating multiple outcome parameters, and through high retention and compliance rates, the study proves feasibility and acceptability for a larger trial comparing speech interventions to control. This pilot investigation provides valuable real world data on recruitability and health metrics.

Below are a few suggestions for the authors' consideration:

1. In the Methods section, some clarification is needed of how dementia was defined and which, if any, formal cognitive tests were used?

2. Who devised and provided the training for the SL therapists, and was there a standardized training programme across all centres?

3. An important point that warrants further discussion is the very large number screened vs recruited (89/2223). Given the prevalence of speech problems in PD (50-70%), what in the authors' opinion is driving this apparent discrepancy (>60% found ineligible due to no speech problems) and how will it impact recruitment for PD-COMM?

4. Page 8 line 9 - there appears to be an error in reporting number of control subjects completing trial (from fig 1 should be 29 not 30)

5. In the discussion section, could a reference be quoted for the MCIC of the communication domain of PDQ-39?

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