Reviewer’s report

Title: A randomised feasibility study to investigate the impact of education and the addition of prompts on the sedentary behaviour of office workers.

Version: 0 Date: 10 Sep 2017

Reviewer: Ailsa Niven

Reviewer's report:

An interesting and well-conducted study that works well reported as a feasibility study. The findings of the study will be of interest to researchers in the growing area of sedentary behaviour. There is room to enhance the justification for the focus on prompts and education, and the use of SCT. Further, the coherence of the paper could be enhanced by aligning the aims, methods, results, discussion and conclusion more clearly. Consideration of using the objectives as a structure may be useful. For example, it isn't immediately clear how the acceptability of the intervention has been evaluated and reported. Perhaps dividing the focus group data into acceptability and determinants of behaviour may work better?

1) Line 66 - would 'spend' work better than 'spent'?  
2) Line 74 - could be useful to acknowledge this reference is a Cochrane review and more fully discuss the findings  
3) Line 83 - given the focus of the intervention, it would be valuable to give a clear definition of a prompt (perhaps from BCT taxonomy)  
4) Lines 83 onwards - are the p values needed - not typically reported in an introduction  
5) Line 90 Room to further discuss 'However, little is understood regarding the behavioural mechanisms employed by participants during the intervention' - what is meant here and could it be expanded to help 'set up' the current study? Perhaps this could be an opportunity to introduce SCT as a potential framework for understanding SB?  
6) Line 92 - it would be useful to 'lead into' this next paragraph more so. It isn't clear why education has suddenly been introduced. Some consideration of why education could be an important intervention component may be useful?  
7) Clear aim
Method

1) Detailed study design - is all this information needed at this point? Reads more like a procedure section and leads to some repetition later (e.g., detail on activPAL data collection)? Could the method be reorganised?

2) Line 123- Why are the aims of the study presented again (and in more detail) - would these not fit better at the end of the introduction?

3) Line 157 - Example prompts would be good. Good to see justification for message framing but this could fit better in the introduction when discussing the potential of prompts?

4) Line 180 - could be useful to align the purpose of the focus groups more closely with the aims of the study in order to explicitly highlight how this aspect of the study is addressing the aims.

5) It would be helpful to organise the structure of the method so that it has consistent ordering - e.g., the ordering of the description of the measures (i.e., activPAL then focus groups) is then mirrored in the discussion of the analysis. Also if the ordering can mirror the aims - that would also help enhance coherence and make it easier for the reader to follow.

6) Line 198 - I may have missed it, but it isn't clear to me where the data on the acceptability of the prompt intervention and education session were collected. Was it the focus groups? Also - unclear what 'reported descriptively and narratively' means. Perhaps there is room here (and in results and discussion) to more explicitly detail this).

Results

1) Could the aims be used to help structure the results / subheadings? - e.g., Eligibility, recruitment and retention as first subheading?

2) Interesting and useful detail reported on participants

3) Line 241 - Similar to previous point - it could be useful to re-orientate the reader to the purpose of the focus groups (i.e., align with aim/objective)

4) Line 241 onwards - the focus group findings are interesting and the quotes are helpful in illustrating the key points.

5) Line 260 - may be better to use the term Outcome Expectations to reflect SCT

6) Line 261 and 274 - aim to avoid 1 sentence paragraphs - perhaps introducing SCT in the introduction could help as these concepts would already have been introduced.
7) Line 274 - a more accurate definition of self-efficacy is "the belief in one's capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to manage prospective situations." (Bandura, 1995, p. 2).

8) Line 309- there is room to be a little more convincing as to how the discussion/quotes relate to observational learning.

9) Line 345 - the method suggested inferential statistics were not conducted but t-tests were? Could be useful to include effect size calculations as well rather than just statistical significance?

10) Table 2- clearly presented

Discussion

1) As indicated above - consistency of terminology/subheadings through the aims, methods, results and discussion would help enhance the coherence of the paper. In the discussion the subheading of 'Understanding the barriers....' is introduced but not really referred to previously

2) Some really interesting discussion around focus group findings - but could be useful to align discussion with results (in terms of ordering and terminology). E.G., in the discussion expectations are discussed first (unlike results)/ self-regulation/ observational learning aren't referred to.

3) Line 452 - it isn't clear where the results are presented to support the conclusion 'both of these components was evaluated favourably…'

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