Author’s response to reviews

Title: Ankle Injury Rehabilitation (AIR): A feasibility randomised controlled trial comparing functional bracing to plaster cast in the treatment of adult ankle fractures

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Reviewer 1

Comment 1: The patient reported outcome measures collected were The MOXFQ (16), 177 the Olerud and Molander Ankle Score (OMAS) (17) and EuroQol EQ-5D-5L (18). Could you please indicate for these measures the content they evaluate, number of items, scoring range etc and if higher is better or worse. For context, could you provide normative data for British population on EQ-5D-5L. It would help with interpreting Table 2.

Response 1: The additional information requested in relation to the outcome measures has been added to the article. Population norms for EQ5D5L data have not been included in the article, but these details are available via the reference within the article.

Comment 2: Table 2 might be better cast with the groups as columns and the measures (over time) as rows. The contrast would be to see how mean scores and variance changes over time. A vertical view of these data would be easier to read.

Response 2: Table 2 has been amended as suggested by reviewer 1.
Comment 3: The data on the feasibility of recruitment and retention etc would best be shown in a Figure like a CONSORT figure then the material would be crystal clear for others to appreciate.

Response 3: A CONSORT figure is included

Reviewer2

Comment 1: P10 you state 'A further 35 (18%) were eligible but declined to participate, the main reason being a preference for the functional brace.' Then in the next paragraph you go on to state 'Of the remaining 85 potential participants who were eligible, 50 (59%) patients consented'. On my first two readings of this I thought these were two different groups of decliners. Maybe this should be made clearer.

Response 1: This sentence has been amended to provide clarity

Comment 2: Table 2 - Need to include n’s in this table. Mention whether or not there was any missing data. Also think the layout could be improved.

Response 2: As per reviewer one the lay put of Table two has been revised and n’s have been included.