Reviewer’s report

Title: A Feasibility Study of an Intervention for Structured Preparation before Detoxification in Alcohol Dependence: the SPADe trial protocol.

Version: 0 Date: 02 Aug 2018

Reviewer: Renata Felipe

Reviewer's report:

Comments on "A Feasibility Study of an Intervention for Structured Preparation before detoxification in Alcohol Dependence: the SPADe trial protocol."

Abstract

There are some acronyms which haven't been detailed in full the first time they were used (e.g. NHS corresponding to National Health System)

It is important to identify the purpose of the feasibility study and the purpose of this paper, which is to describe the protocol. From the summary it is not clear/evident what we will find in the paper/study.

Methods: "Fifty participants will be recruited from two UK community alcohol treatment services." It is unclear what intervention patients will undergo in the methods section.

Background

There are some acronyms that are not explained.

There is an extended paragraph explaining the harm of using alcohol. Then, the author explains the outcomes of treatment with detoxification. It would be more logical if the subject was progressively explained: Explaining the damages of the alcohol, followed by the standard treatment, and then talking about the aspects and damages of the treatment.

Author: "Additionally people with alcohol dependence who experience multiple detoxifications show increased impairment in mental functioning (6, 7)." Looking at the cited references, it is also not possible to conclude that detoxification alone causes harm, since the articles cited are not categorical with this data.

Author: "In the light of this evidence suggesting an accumulation of adverse effects following repeated detoxifications, it is crucial to maximise treatment effectiveness and to reduce the risk
of exposing people to the adverse effects associated with the detoxification process itself." It is not possible to justify the study with the adverse effects of detoxification if that is not very well embedded in the text. It is preferable to justify talking about the costs, the losses of the alcoholism.

The received document was not well formatted. E.g. two commas together in sequence.

Methods

Is there any test for assessing motivation in this protocol?

Will any specific tests be performed to assess cognitive impairment? It is very common in chronic alcoholic patients.

Patients dependent on alcohol, users of other chemical substances as well, will be included?

Put in the diagram the number of patients that will be recruited for each arm.

There are interventions performed in the post-treatment, such as in AA, that may be similar to the intervention evaluated by the study, hence becoming a confusing factor.

It would be interesting the study provided a table with the instruments applied in each period.

Level of interest
Please indicate how interesting you found the manuscript:

An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English
Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

Acceptable

Declaration of competing interests
Please complete a declaration of competing interests, considering the following questions:

1. Have you in the past five years received reimbursements, fees, funding, or salary from an organisation that may in any way gain or lose financially from the publication of this manuscript, either now or in the future?

2. Do you hold any stocks or shares in an organisation that may in any way gain or lose financially from the publication of this manuscript, either now or in the future?

3. Do you hold or are you currently applying for any patents relating to the content of the manuscript?
4. Have you received reimbursements, fees, funding, or salary from an organization that holds or has applied for patents relating to the content of the manuscript?

5. Do you have any other financial competing interests?

6. Do you have any non-financial competing interests in relation to this paper?

If you can answer no to all of the above, write 'I declare that I have no competing interests' below. If your reply is yes to any, please give details below.

I declare that I have no competing interests

I agree to the open peer review policy of the journal. I understand that my name will be included on my report to the authors and, if the manuscript is accepted for publication, my named report including any attachments I upload will be posted on the website along with the authors' responses. I agree for my report to be made available under an Open Access Creative Commons CC-BY license (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/). I understand that any comments which I do not wish to be included in my named report can be included as confidential comments to the editors, which will not be published.

I agree to the open peer review policy of the journal

Were you mentored through this peer review?

No