

PEER REVIEW HISTORY

BMJ Open publishes all reviews undertaken for accepted manuscripts. Reviewers are asked to complete a checklist review form (<http://bmjopen.bmj.com/site/about/resources/checklist.pdf>) and are provided with free text boxes to elaborate on their assessment. These free text comments are reproduced below.

ARTICLE DETAILS

TITLE (PROVISIONAL)	MyBackPain: Evaluation of an innovative consumer-focused website for low back pain - study protocol for a randomised controlled trial
AUTHORS	Hall, Leanne; Ferreira, Manuela; Setchell, Jenny; French, Simon; Kasza, Jessica; Bennell, Kim; Hunter, David; Vicenzino, Bill; Dickson, Chris; Hodges, Paul

VERSION 1 - REVIEW

REVIEWER	Mary A Rogers Univeristy of Michigan, USA
REVIEW RETURNED	09-Nov-2018

GENERAL COMMENTS	Well done protocol. Important topic.
-------------------------	--------------------------------------

REVIEWER	Maurits van Tulder Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, the Netherlands
REVIEW RETURNED	12-Dec-2018

GENERAL COMMENTS	<p>The manuscript describes the methods of a randomized controlled trial. The methods are adequate and clearly described.</p> <p>On page 10, the authors describe that "This study will recruit participants with LBP from November 2017 until the sample size is achieved." This indicates that the study is already ongoing. Peer review of the study design is a bit redundant if the trial has already started. So any suggestions for changing the design do not seem relevant anymore.</p> <p>However, I have one suggestion. On page 10, the authors state that "Participants will be recruited from the community using newsletters, email lists, consumer groups (e.g. Arthritis Australia, Chronic Pain Australia), websites, social media, and talks at group meetings. Our partner health insurer (Medibank Private) will also make available their insurance membership cohort for recruitment purposes."</p> <p>Contamination might not be a high risk, but several people who participate in the same consumer group or group meeting may volunteer for this study. If they are randomized to different groups, the participants in the control group may hear from participants in the intervention group about the mybackpain site and realize that they are part of the control group. So blinding may not be</p>
-------------------------	---

	successful in all participants. The authors should describe how they will avoid any contamination.
--	--

VERSION 1 – AUTHOR RESPONSE

Reviewer(s)' Comments to Author:

Reviewer: 1

Reviewer Name: Mary A Rogers

Institution and Country: Univeristy of Michigan, USA

Please state any competing interests or state 'None declared': None declared

Please leave your comments for the authors below

Well done protocol. Important topic.

- Thank you for your kind comments on our manuscript.

Reviewer: 2

Reviewer Name: Maurits van Tulder

Institution and Country: Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, the Netherlands

Please state any competing interests or state 'None declared': none declared

Please leave your comments for the authors below

The manuscript describes the methods of a randomized controlled trial. The methods are adequate and clearly described.

On page 10, the authors describe that "This study will recruit participants with LBP from November 2017 until the sample size is achieved." This indicates that the study is already ongoing. Peer review of the study design is a bit redundant if the trial has already started. So any suggestions for changing the design do not seem relevant anymore.

However, I have one suggestion. On page 10, the authors state that "Participants will be recruited from the community using newsletters, email lists, consumer groups (e.g. Arthritis Australia, Chronic Pain Australia), websites, social media, and talks at group meetings. Our partner health insurer (Medibank Private) will also make available their insurance membership cohort for recruitment purposes."

Contamination might not be a high risk, but several people who participate in the same consumer group or group meeting may volunteer for this study. If they are randomized to different groups, the participants in the control group may hear from participants in the intervention group about the mybackpain site and realize that they are part of the control group. So blinding may not be successful in all participants. The authors should describe how they will avoid any contamination.

- Thank you for reviewing our protocol. As you suggest, contamination across groups is possible. However, the consumer groups we have used for recruitment do not hold face-to-face

activities and thus, contact between individuals is no more likely than members of the general public. We acknowledge that any trial participant may have friends or colleagues participating in the trial. This is unavoidable in a study of this nature. We have made every effort to minimise access to the study website by non-intervention-group participants by providing a unique username and password to individuals in the intervention group. This is accompanied by a request for them to not share their log-in details or the website information with anyone.

- We have added the following text to the manuscript: “The website is not publicly available and no content can be accessed without the username/password combination individually provided to participants in the Intervention group, with a request not to share the website or its content with others.”