

Response to Editor: (30 April 25)

We wish to thank the Editor and reviewers for taking the time to read our manuscript, and for the valuable suggestions. We have made the recommended changes and address each suggestion below by reviewer. Additionally, we have highlighted the changes made in the manuscript.

Reviewer #1:

*“One minor recommendation that I have is to separate the need for future research in the area based on this study and the breadth of the implications as a separate heading. For example, the final paragraph of the Discussion section basically has all the elements related to this and it may have more impact if it is written under its own subheading within the article. “Implications for further research” for instance would provide the reader with a clear understanding of why this study is valuable and how to use the findings to enhance further research.”*

Thank you for your recommendation. We have taken your suggestion and placed the final paragraph under a separate heading entitled. “Future Implications”

Reviewer #2:

*A couple of areas do need to be addressed. The authors describe the “Toe Flare Observation” as an investigator-created tool. It is unclear if this assessment tool has been validated, or if any reliability studies have been performed. If not, its inclusion as a specific tool is suspect, and toe positioning should rather be reported simply as observation by the investigator.*

*Additionally, pre- and post-intervention measurements are provided for the Berg Balance Scale, the Four-Stage Balance Test, and the Functional Reach Test. Measures of responsiveness, such as Minimal Detectable Change (MDC) or Minimal Clinically Important Difference (MCID), should be included to indicate if any observed changes were statistically significant. Significance should then be reported. The Shirley Ryan Ability Lab Rehabilitation Measures Database reports MDC and MCID values for most outcome measures specific to patient populations. This would be a relatively quick way to gather this data. MDC data is preferred, as it’s a more robust psychometric.*

Thank you for your comments. You are correct, there is no existing measurement for the toe flaring phenomenon we observed. As you very succinctly point out, as we have yet to conduct any reliability/validity testing, it is suspect to present this as an established tool. We have taken your suggestion and modified the text to address this as “observation of toe positioning” in the intervention section, and report the findings as observations by the occupational therapy practitioner in a separate section in the results.

We are very grateful for your suggestion regarding documenting measures of responsiveness. Following your suggestion we have researched the standards for including the Minimal Detectable Change (MDC) and were able to report changes on the Berg Balance Scale and the Functional Reach Test. However, we could not locate MDC values for the CDC's 4-stage balance test.

We hope these changes meet with your approval and look forward to moving forward with the process.

Sincerely,

Brigitte Belanger