Reviewer’s report

Title: Developing a scale to measure family dynamics related to long-term care, and testing that scale in a multicenter cross-sectional study

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Reviewer: MARINA ECONOMOU

Reviewer’s report:

The authors of the present study report the psychometric properties of an original scale on family dynamics, when caring for older individuals. The scale can be used in both research and clinical contexts.

In general this is a succinct, well-written paper.

There are two main problems with the present study. People caring for an older individual were not involved in the research team developing the scale. Furthermore, prior to pilot testing the instrument, the scale should have been read or discussed in the context—perhaps of a focus group—by people of the targeted population. In line with this, the construct validity of the scale needs additional support (apart from the analysis suggesting that it taps a unidimensional construct).

In addition, since the instrument can be used in intervention contexts and given that family dynamics change over time (Discussion, page 17, “family members might change their attitudes and behaviors over time, in a way that offsets the adverse effects of the duration of caregiving”), good test-retest reliability of the instrument is fundamental; however, authors do not present their findings with regard to that.

It is my opinion, that since the scale is to be used in clinical settings, the small number of items is actually an advantage of the scale and not a disadvantage.

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

Declaration of competing interests:

'I declare that I have no competing interests'