Author's response to reviews

Title: Staging of mobility, transfer and walking functions of elderly persons based on the codes of the International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health

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Author's response to reviews: see over
Dear Dr. Crow:

Please find attached a copy of the manuscript entitled “Staging of mobility, transfer and walking functions of elderly persons based on the codes of the International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health,” which I would like to resubmit for consideration for publication as an Original Article in *BMC Geriatrics*. This manuscript greatly benefitted from the thoughtful comments by the reviewers. I hope you will now find it satisfactory for publication in *BMC Geriatrics*.

This study suggests that we can now better understand and manage patient care using functional information based on the International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF). By using the knowledge used in this study, ICF code can be more easily adopted as a common language among health care professionals.

This paper would be of interest to your broad readership, particularly for the health care professionals interested in geriatric care because it details the development of a new scale for staging basic mobility and walking functions based on the ICF.

The work presented herein is original, has not been previously published and is not under consideration for publication in any other journal. All authors listed have contributed sufficiently to the project to be included as authors, and all those who are qualified to be authors are listed in the author byline. I attest to the fact that all authors listed on the title page have read the manuscript, attest to the validity and legitimacy of the data and its interpretation, and agree to its submission to *BMC Geriatrics*.

I would like to thank you again for considering this manuscript for publication in *BMC Geriatrics*. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or require further information.

Sincerely yours
Answer to the reviewer

Dear Dr. Finch

Thank you very much for your precious comments on our manuscript. Our work could not have been better without your suggestions.

Minor Essential Revisions
1 The Abstract: This should be rewritten, especially the methods and results sections, to reflect the paper better.

Answer: Suggested changes were incorporated in the abstract.

Methods:
2 Page 7 line 145 could the authors add 33 before the ICF codes to link the thought back to line 144.

Answer: Changed as suggested

3 Page 8 line 155-156 might read better as ‘The developmental sample was measured with the 33 ICF items.’

Answer: Changed as suggested

4 The Data analysis section should mention that the characteristics of the sample and contrasts between variables were performed with SPSS......
Answer: Changed as suggested.

5 Page 9 line183-186 needs to be clearer. ......fit statistics are sample size dependent and as the sample here is large all items would be significant and not fit the model unless a smaller random sample is selected. Thus......

Answer: This sentence was changed as:
If we use the total sample, most of the items appear to not fit the Rasch model because fit statistics are sample size dependent and as the sample here is relatively large. Therefore, all items would be significant and not fit the model unless a smaller random sample is selected[22]. Thus, taking into account the relationship between sample size and significance of mean-square statistics, the authors decided to use the sample size of 300 [23].

6 Page 10 line195 ...scales one for basic mobility and one for walking. The next sentence is not clear.

Answer: This sentence was changed as suggested as follows..
“Then, two Guttman-type scales namely “basic mobility” and “walking” were constructed using the four ICF items selected for each scale, and illustrations were attached.”

Discussion:
7 page 12 line 255 ‘Some age categories...’ I am unsure of what this sentence is trying to state. The results section stated there was no DIF by age, thus I am unclear on the point being made in this sentence.

Answer: This sentence was changed as suggested.
“Some cross-group difference was analyzed using DIF analysis and no DIF was found between the elderly persons in institutions and day-care facilities, which implies the applicability of this method for both settings.”

8 Figures the English in the figures needs to be consistent either a short form or written out e.g. Walking threshold 4 ‘does not use public transportation ,but can climb stairs’ or’ does not use public transport but climbs stairs’
Answer: This was corrected as suggested.

9 Appendix on the DIF does not need to be included as the text is much clearer now.

Answer: Thank you for your suggestion. Although we have changed the description of the result, it is more obvious with illustrative version of DIF analysis. In addition as we have discussed about the validity based on the DIF analysis, therefore, we would like to retain the Appendix on the DIF.