Reviewer's report

Title: Validation of a questionnaire for assessing fecal impaction in the elderly: impact of cognitive impairment, and using a proxy

Version: 3 Date: 12 October 2012

Reviewer: MARIA NABAL

Reviewer's report:

General comments:
This paper is interesting and will offer a good methodological approach to a difficult problem. The question posed by the authors is well defined. Methods are appropriate and well described. The manuscript achieves the standards for reporting and data deposition. The English is adequate.

Major Compulsory Revisions:
1. Abstract should be revised because the “method” chapter does no reflect the methodology developed and it does not allow a good understanding of the research. The “results” chapter does not offer any result about the tool developing process.
2. From my point of view, Background is a bit short and could be completed with references to the assessment tools development and validation in elderly. It could be interesting to discuss about changes in faecal impaction treatment by having this new tool.
3. “Results” chapter does not include the 5 questions questionnaire. It does not offer any data from the gastroenterologist and nursing home doctors suggestions
4. “Discussion” chapter does not include the limitations of the study, or possible sources of bias. There is no comment on the medical and nursing records as a gold standard to assess the concurrent validity. Authors do not discuss the real utility of the questionnaire and the improvements that could be achieved by using it. There are few references to other similar publications.
5. Bibliography offers only 3 authors. In cite number 10, authors are missed (Dewey, Micheal E; Parker, Christine J.)

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'