Reviewer’s report

Title: Dalhousie Dyspnea Scales: construct and content Validity of pictorial scales for measuring dyspnea.

Version: 2 Date: 21 March 2005

Reviewer: José Martinez

Reviewer’s report:

General

This is a very interesting paper related to the development of new dyspnea scales to be specifically employed in children. The authors described methods and results dealing to initial psychometric validation and determination of the scales properties.

Two of the scales clearly measure the degree of respiratory discomfort associated to two distinct respiratory sensations: throat and chest constriction. The other one intends to measure the degree of present dyspnea, anchored in the intensity of the respiratory effort associated to physical activity.

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Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)

# The authors must justify the reasons why the results related to effort pictures were missing for one child (Figure 2). In the same way, why the information obtained analyzing only the patients older than eight years did not reach a total of 56 subjects in any scale (Figure 3) ?

# The authors could add more information about the distribution of the patients according their age. A graphic with such data would be useful.

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Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)

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Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

# The authors could comment in the Discussion, the possible reasons why the asthmatic children placed the sixth and seventh pictures of chest tightness at a different position than the normals and the CF patients.

# The authors could also comment in the Discussion, how they think the present scales should be employed. Would be correct to sum the three scores obtained with the pictures to obtain a global dyspnea index ?

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What next?: Unable to decide on acceptance or rejection until the authors have responded to the major compulsory revisions

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

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

**Statistical review:** No

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests.