Reviewer’s report

Title: Technology-dependency among patients discharged from a children's hospital: a retrospective cohort study

Version: 2 Date: 23 March 2005

Reviewer: Susan Kirk

Reviewer’s report:

General
The authors have substantially improved this paper’s clarity and it promises to make an interesting contribution to the literature.

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

I still have concerns over how they define technology dependency but they do make their definition explicit in the text. Including medications (non-intravenous, non-device related) is unconventional and I would like them to present a stronger justification in the background section of why they have included this group of children and the types of medications they are referring to which would lead to an emergency admission. Their inclusion of this group of children accounts for a higher prevalence rate than might be expected.

I feel that wheelchairs should be excluded from the analysis (and from Table 2) as noted before. They cannot be included in the study’s definition – their failure or discontinuation would not result in an adverse health consequence warranting hospitalisation! It could be noted in the text that two children were wheelchair users.

It would be helpful to know why some technologies/devices, commonly covered by the term in the research literature, are not represented in the sample – naso-gastric/jejunal tubes, ventilators, oxygen therapy, dialysis. It may reflect the small sample size and if so this could be noted in the discussion.

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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)

Figure 4 (bar chart)– there are errors in presentation that need amending.

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Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

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'