Reviewer's report

Title: The development of a fall risk assessment for demented nursing home patients in the Netherlands

Version: 2 Date: 28 August 2005

Reviewer: Ngaire Kerse

Reviewer's report:

General
The rationale and background to the study are well described.
The methods well described and sensible
Literature search as quite broad and not selected just for studies involving demented patients and thus the risk factors identified are sensible and have face validity for all groups in residential care but may lack utility for demented patients alone.

The process of development is valid and well described, however without describing the utility of the tool to identify fallers, the article adds another to a long list of reported tools. There is insufficient detail to understand exactly how to ascertain the presence and strength of risk factor, ie what exact tool to use to establish presence of mobility problems.

-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)
If the authors could outline how the new tool is planned to be used ie in identifying people as high risk or in directing interventions among the group, . A comment on other tools that have been used for people with dementia such as Haines, BMJ. 328(7441):676, 2004 (although in a different setting) and any other tools specifically for people with dementia would increase the usefulness of the article.

-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

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

-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

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 of limited interest

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No

Declaration of competing interests:
'I declare that I have no competing interests'