Reviewer's report

**Title:** Listening to patients: using verbal data in the validation of the Aberdeen Measures of Impairment, Activity Limitation and Participation Restriction (Ab-IAP)

**Version:** 3  **Date:** 26 May 2010

**Reviewer:** Ingvild Kjeken

**Reviewer's report:**

Major comments:

It is still somewhat unclear to me what the purpose of the cognitive interviewing was. The results point to several matters in the 35-item version that should be improved. For example, the findings suggest that item B11 should be reordered (not follow after B10), that lifting should be defined more precisely in B20, and that the instruction for how to fill in the questionnaire needs to be revised. Even if there are some general suggestions in the discussion for how measures can be improved, there is no reporting in the results if and how the 35 item version was actually changed as a result of the interviews. Thus, it still seems as if the cognitive interviewing was performed to validate the results from the statistical analysis, more than as a validation of the measure itself.

Minor comments:

The measures are sometimes termed Ab-IAP and other times Ab_IAP.

The third sentence page 5 is redundant, as this is already stated in the first sentence at the same page.

Page 8, first and second paragraph: It would be probably help the readers if the authors stated that “out of the 1180 segments that were analysed in the 59-items Ab-IAP, problems were identified in 4.7%.” and “Problems were identified in 3.1% of the 700 segments in the 35-item Ab-IAP”.

Suggested heading in the sixth column in table 1: “Number of items with no identified problems”

Suggested heading in second column in tables 2, 3 and 4: “Number of participants with no identified problems”.

**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.