Author’s response to reviews

Title: Do public health nurses in Norway promote oral health?

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Author’s response to reviews: see over
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Editorial Board, BMC Oral Health

The manuscript entitled “Do public health nurses in Norway promote oral health? A national survey” has earlier been submitted to BMC Oral Health. The reviewers then gave valuable comments which we now have addressed. It is therefore time to submit the revised manuscript asked for, now entitled “Do public health nurses in Norway promote oral health?” for evaluation and possible publication. The changes made in the revised manuscript are highlighted (red colour). We also have provided a copy of the questionnaire as an additional file.

Point-by-point responses according to the reviewers’ comments are attached.

All authors have read and approved the revised manuscript, and as before, we have followed the instructions for authors. We confirm that there is no conflict of interests regarding this revised manuscript.

Yours sincerely,

Marit Slåttelid Skeie
(on behalf of the authors).
Reviewer: 1

Major Compulsory Revisions:
1. A major problem with this study is the low response rate (44.8%). The authors need to elaborate on to what extent this influence the results of the study. Any kind of drop-out analysis would be welcome, e.g. did the response rate vary from clinic to clinic; did it vary by district; by size of the clinic; etc

Response:
We have changed the original part of the Discussion to: “The major methodological limitation of this study was the low response rate and the lack of information about the non-respondents. The methodological strength was that the study was based on a randomized sampling, lowering some of the scientific concerns related to systematic differences between the respondents and the non-respondents. Nevertheless, this high proportion of non-responses in the study made it unwise to regard this study as a national survey, which was the original goal. Still some background information given from a group of The Norwegian Nurses Organisation’s (NNO’s) tended towards representativeness. They could report that the mean age in the current Norwegian population of public health nurses (N=2853) was 49 years, which corresponded to the mean age of the public health nurses participating in the study”

2. I think “A national survey” should be removed from the title.

Response:
The title is changed, as written in the Discussion “this high proportion of non-responses in the study made it unwise to regard this study as a national survey, which was the original goal”

3. More information on how the questions for the questionnaire used in Study 1 was developed, e.g. was there a theoretical, conceptual framework used as a basis for formulating the questions; was the questionnaire piloted and pretested; etc

Response:
In the Discussion: “The lack of theoretical models in the construction of the questionnaire has its natural explanations: a collaborative team with members from the Directorate of Health and the Faculty of Dentistry, University of Oslo, had requested that the focus be on the topics presented in the questionnaire. Future work aiming to reveal more in-depth knowledge about the nurses’ role in oral health promotion will include questionnaires based on conceptual frames”.

The questionnaire was not piloted or pretested. This information is not included in the manuscript, but the reason for it, is the same as for the lack of models.

Minor Essential Revisions:
1. I think a careful language revision would improve this manuscript.

Response:
The manuscript has been edited by a language editing service (Write2Publish [w2p@orange.fr]).

Discretionary Revision
1. I think a more appropriate title would be: “Do public health nurses in Norway promote oral health?”
Response:
The title is now changed.

Reviewer: 2
1. I feel better to rename the paper as it was not a national survey.

Response:
The paper has been renamed.

2. The way to solve this is to undertake a drop-out analysis to solve the representativeness of the sample

Response:
We lacked information about the non-responders. See response to Reviewer 1.

3. more multivariate approach.

Response:
This advise has been taken into account; a more multivariate approach has been undertaken.

The Editor
1. please provide a copy of your questionnaire as an additional file

Response:
This has been done

2. Funding

Response:
“We also are grateful for the funding provided by the University of Oslo and University of Bergen”.

3. Language correction

Response:
The manuscript has been edited by a language editing service (Write2Publish [w2p@orange.fr]).