Reviewer's report

Title: Development process and initial validation of the Ethical Conflict in Nursing Questionnaire

Version: 1 Date: 23 December 2012

Reviewer: Freda Ganz

Reviewer's report:

I enjoyed reading this manuscript and believe that it adds to the body of literature in the area of ethical conflict among critical care nurses. The following are my specific comments:

Major Compulsory Revisions:

1. The authors described the elements of their proposed model well however how these elements fit together remains unclear to me. I would like to see a figure that shows the model as they propose it.
   -for example, I understand how frequency, degree and exposure fit together but I am unclear how the type of ethical conflict fits here. Also, this aspect is not included in the results section
2. The use of the ICN code of ethics was very briefly described as part of the structure of the new questionnaire. This is not clear and in my opinion needs to be further explained (and possibly added to the model)
3. Table 1 needs editing in English
4. Table 4 is unclear - I do not understand what it is trying to say

Minor Essential Revisions:

1. The list of the types of conflicts/scenarios is very brief. I would have liked to see either a deeper description of the scenarios/conflicts and/or a listing as an appendix to the manuscript.
2. Because of the issue that I describe in #1 above, it is unclear to me whether conflicts related to families are included (are they in interpersonal relationships). When I refer to families, there are several issues-conflicts within the family, between the family and the patient, between the family and the staff. I am also unclear where conflicts between staff members fit-are they under the general area of interpersonal relationships or under specific types of conflicts.
3. I am not sure that there is a need for Table 2 - this table goes into a lot of detail about the reliability analysis which is essentially adequately summarized in the text. The general reader does not need to see this much detail, in my opinion.
4. I also think that Figure 1 is basically a repeat (more or less) of what is reported in the table that describes the results of the PCA. I do not think that both are needed and in my opinion the table gives more information
5. I also wonder about figure 2. This information is also given in the results section under the very detailed statistical analyses that were conducted in order to determine that the distribution was not normal. In my opinion, both the detailed description and the figure are not needed.

Discresionary Revisions:

1. Did the content reviewers also comment about conflicts that were not relevant or ones that should have been included that were not included?

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

**Quality of written English**: Acceptable

**Statistical review**: Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.

**Declaration of competing interests**: I have no competing interests with this paer