Reviewer’s report

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

Version: 7 Date: 16 March 2013

Reviewer: Joan Finegan

Reviewer’s report:

I think the authors have worked hard to address the reviewers’ suggestions and almost all my concerns have been addressed.

Discretionary Revision: I agree with the other reviewer that Table 2 is not necessary. The text provides enough detail for the reader and I don’t think that it is important to see the individual alpha of the scale when each item is eliminated.

Figure 1 implies that moral state should correlate with IEEC. Though I realize there are problems with the normality of the data, do the two variables correlate? I’m curious about this but including such a correlation is not needed.

Minor Essential: One part of the questionnaire still puzzles me. Figure 1 explains clearly how the four variables are related but it doesn’t address is how “moral state” is incorporated numerically (or quantitatively) into the model. Is it correct to assume that it is not? In other words, is it a separate variable that gives important information for future researchers to consider? If my reasoning is correct, then I’d like to suggest that the authors add a sentence that clarifies explicitly this notion (i.e., that moral state and IEEC are not combined numerically).

This aside, I think the paper is quite interesting and presents a creative way of looking at the relations between these different sorts of variables. I look forward to reading future studies that address how this measure is related to other constructs.

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 declare that I have no competing interests