Reviewer's report

Title: '20 days protected learning' - students' experiences of an Overseas Nurses Programme - 4 years on: A retrospective survey

Version: 1 Date: 23 November 2010

Reviewer: James Buchan

Reviewer's report:

Minor Essential Revisions

a few typos e.g background section- "countires"; Fig 1 "Indian" "Chinese": should be India and China

Major Compulsory Revisions (which the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)

Authors need to more explain the type of ONP on offer at Bournemouth- they state that 80% of nurses from Aus, NZ, USA, etc did ONP at Bournemouth- but the time period they are covering, the vast majority of nurses coming into the UK were coming from India and Philippines- they need to explain what was on offer at Bournemouth that filtered nurses in or out, depending on source country. This links to the statement in results section that Fig 1 datamirrors that from NMC statistics- it does not. Data from NMC shows clearly that the two main source countries at the period were Philippines and India which only account for 2% of those on the Bournemouth course. Authors need to clarify/ explain

Other points:

Intro "although Buchan et al. included nurses from Aus etc"- this report was published in 2005 so obviously could not have covered the ONP which was only issued in late 2005-- etxt needs amending

Intro: statement beginning "This lack of literature could be attributed to..." Why? Not clear.

Intro: use of "non- commonealth"-[ which means countries other than 53 countries of Commonwealth] do authors mean non "old commonweath" [Aus, Can, NZ, SA]

Methods- what was trend in participant numbers across 2007-2010 period- and what research/ reporting issues are there about covering a cohort some of whom had completed the course two years ago, and others much more recently?

Results- statement that because 80% of nurses taking protected learning ONP were at Bournemouth increases generlsability nees some more explanation

Fig -s ee above- this does not mirroe NMC stats on overseas regsitsrants so text must be changes- and indded an explanation given for the fact that the US, Aus,
Can are covered, and main countries of entry- India, Philippines, are not discussed.

Discussion- how would a NCLEX-RN type model "alleviate many of the issues..." about peer support.

Strengths and limitations
should be some discussion about methods and low response rate
needs to clarify that this is one type of ONP which means that the population is not representative of ALL overseas nurses coming into UK at that time period.

Conclusions... "working holiday" model was developed and referred to by Buchan, Sochalski and Parkin- ref no. 10, and developed further by Buchan et al, ref 3- should be acknowledged.

some relevant refs missing. e.g.
Allan H, Larsen J: “We need respect”: experiences of internationally recruited nurses in the UK: ; Surrey. ; 2003.

work by Hardill and Macdonald

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'