Reviewer's report

Title: Inter- and intrarater reliability of Minimal Eating Observation and Nutrition Form - version II (MEONF-II) nurse assessments among hospital inpatients

Version: 1 Date: 10 April 2014

Reviewer: Kylie Lange

Reviewer's report:

A well presented article on the inter- and intra-rater reliability of a malnutrition screening tool. The authors have previously published on validity and diagnostic performance of the tool; this is the first paper to review its inter- and intra-rater reliability.

Major Compulsory Revisions:

1. Abstract. It should be made clear in the abstract that while a total of 8 nurses participated in the study, each patient was scored by k=2 of these. At the moment the description gives the impression that each patient was scored by all 8 nurses.

2. Methods, paragraph 2 (Participants). I would like more information on the rationale behind only including every second of the consenting subjects in the study. Why were not all 56 patients included? Or, if the aim was always n=28, why were 56 consented?

3. Methods, paragraph 4 (Data collection) & Table 2. What distinguished the "first group" of raters from the "second group"? The methods state that the assessments were done in parallel, so it's not clear to me how the nurses in each pair were designated as number "1" or "2". Was this done randomly after the assessments were completed? If it reflects the order that the assessments were completed in, could this be specified in the methods along with some details on how the ordering and timing was determined (ie, what determined which nurse completed their assessment first). Within each pair of nurses was it the same individual who went first for each patient?

4. Methods, paragraph 11 (Analysis). Please clarify the method of ICC used. Was it really a two-way fixed model? The subjects factor is always random if we expect that the selected sample tells us something about a larger population of interest (for example, see page 574 in the referenced Schuck paper). So the choices for a two-way model would be either two-way mixed (subjects random, raters fixed) or two-way random (subjects random, raters random). Can you please clarify what was used here?

Minor Essential Revisions:

1. Table 1. Second footnote is incomplete or has a typo.
Discretionary Revisions:

1. The authors may want to consider including in the Discussion a comment on the performance of the tool at both the group and individual level. See for example, section 3.5.1. in the GRRAS guidelines.

**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.