Reviewer’s report

Title: Knowledge of pressure ulcer prevention: A cross-sectional and comparative study among nurses

Version: 1 Date: 21 December 2006

Reviewer: Michael Clark

Reviewer’s report:

General
This manuscript provides an interesting comparison between the knowledge of cohorts of Dutch nurses from 1991 and 2003 upon aspects of pressure ulcer prevention. The objectives of the study are clearly stated and the methodology adopted was appropriate. The collected data has been handled appropriately and the conclusions of the study reflect a correct interpretation of the data along with a clear discussion of the limitations of the study.

Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)
There are some problems with the comparisons between the two cohorts recruited in 2003 – one from the subscribers to a professional publication and the second from staff within hospitals that participated at least once within a national pressure ulcer prevalence survey. The journal subscribers are described as non participating in the prevalence surveys but no data is presented to substantiate this claim and one of the exclusion criteria was if the individual received more than one questionnaire (ie journal subscriber who took part in the national pressure ulcer survey). The authors need to justify the description of the journal subscribers as representing nurses who did not participate in a survey. The survey participating nurses also need further description – were they working in the hospital at the time of the survey? Were they active participants in the survey? It may be expected that a number of nurses working in a facility which participated in the survey had little or no awareness of the survey if they were not actively involved. Given these uncertainties it may be more appropriate for the authors to restrict their comments to the comparison between 1991 and 2003?

The authors note that in both 1991 and 2002 many returned questionnaires were not included in the subsequent analysis – for example in 2003 128 returned questionnaires were not analysed – the authors should provide reasons why these forms were excluded?

Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)
One of the stated inclusion criteria was that participants had to be registered nurses but Table 1 highlights that the majority of respondents were enrolled nurses. This may be a issue with the English of the manuscript? Did the authors mean that to be included the participant had to be a qualified nurse rather than specifically a registered nurse?

Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)
None

What next?: Unable to decide on acceptance or rejection until the authors have responded to the major compulsory revisions

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

Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being published

Statistical review: Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.
Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests