Reviewer's report

Title: Competency, confidence and conflicting evidence: key issues affecting health visitors’ use of research evidence in practice

Version: 2 Date: 28 January 2009

Reviewer: carolyn hicks

Reviewer's report:

Thank you for incorporating most of my suggested revisions. I am, however, still concerned about the issue of the development of the questionnaire - see below.

Major compulsory revisions.

I apologise for returning this again, but the issues relating to the questionnaire development have not been fully addressed. The questionnaire is the key measurement tool in this study and as it has been developed especially for the purpose of this research, it is essential that some consideration is given to the key principles of psychometrics in its development. The reference to validity on page 7 is not appropriate in this context. The points that should be covered are:

1. Construct validity (ie the key theoretical themes that emerge from a systematic review of the literature) must be identified. This should include some information about the literature search and search terms, the method of distilling the data into themes (eg Attride-Stirling’s 2002 thematic concept Analysis) and the actual theoretical constructs that emerged, together with the research references that pertain to each.

2. The content validity (ie the observable manifestation of the underlying constructs) must also be documented. These are the actual items/questions that are generated by the underlying themes; some mention should be made about the items/questions that relate to each theme, again with the associated references. Face and predictive validity are less relevant for this study.

3. points 1 and 2 could easily be tabulated, in order to save on words and to ensure that the themes and items clearly relate to each other. So - the headings across the top of the table could include: THEME; ASSOCIATED REFERENCES; QUESTIONS/ITEMS; ASSOCIATED REFERENCES FOR EACH THEME

3. The reliability (ie whether the questions measure the same construct every time they are asked) should be addressed, albeit briefly.

The amendments have some grammatical errors (eg p7, Lines 3,6; p9, line 3 of the highlighted amendments etc etc.

Again, I apologise for requesting this information, but as the study's value rests on the soundness of its measuring tool, it is essential that the process and details are included.
**Level of interest:** An article of importance in its field

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

**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.