Reviewer's report

**Title:** Communication and advice exchange of nursing staff: a social network analyses of 35 long-term care units

**Version:** 1  **Date:** 31 December 2010

**Reviewer:** Beatrice Kalisch

**Reviewer's report:**

Is the question posed by the authors well defined? The study questions need to be stated more clearly i.e. Does the size of the unit impact informal communication networks, advice networks? This needs work. And once they are clarified, the findings of the study need to be reported by each question. Group projects needs to be described more fully early in the paper. This is a very important area of inquiry and is becoming increasingly more important. The size of teams in nursing is a major issue and barrier to effective teamwork.

2. Are the methods appropriate and well described? Yes. They appear appropriate.

1. Are the data sound? Yes, just need to be presented more clearly in relation to the study questions.

4. Does the manuscript adhere to the relevant standards for reporting and data deposition? Yes

5. Are the discussion and conclusions well balanced and adequately supported by the data? Yes

6. Are limitations of the work clearly stated? Yes

7. Do the authors clearly acknowledge any work upon which they are building, both published and unpublished? Yes

8. Do the title and abstract accurately convey what has been found? Somewhat confusing—needs clarification

9. Is the writing acceptable? Yes but there are errors like Taken needs to be changed to taking page 10 and state direction instead of just the variables are related such as on page 9

Minor essential revisions needed

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

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable
**Statistical review:** Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests