Reviewer's report

Title: How much time do nurses have for patients? A longitudinal study quantifying hospital nurses' patterns of task time distribution and interactions with health professionals

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Reviewer: Jenny Carryer

Reviewer's report:

The topic/question posed is of immense interest and importance given growing concern about the presumed changes to nursing practice caused by decreasing length of stay, difficulties in adequate staffing levels, increased acuity, risk aversion behaviours and more.

The authors have conducted a well designed study which allows us a quantifiable insight into exactly how nursing practice is now constructed in terms of time usage and direct patient care access.

Limitations are clearly stated although I would add that I am currently supervising a critical ethnography of nursing practice in acute wards in NZ and these results exactly mirror what the student is reporting.

The discussion appropriately raises concerns for the level and quality of surveillance able to be provided when time is spent in the manner shown by this study.

The title is fit for purpose and the abstract is concise but comprehensive

This is an excellent paper written in a succinct and highly readable style. I can suggest no useful revisions although I qualify that by noting that my skills are qualitative rather than quantitative

My congratulations to the authors

Level of interest: An article of outstanding merit and interest in its field

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