Reviewer's report

Title: The BARRIERS SCALE - the Barriers to Research Utilization Scale: A systematic review

Version: 5 Date: 11 August 2009

Reviewer: Judith A Ritchie

Reviewer's report:

1. This paper is very clear and well conceptualized. It addresses a question that is not new but have taken a new and very solid approach to examination of the issue.

2. The methods are appropriate and well described with very clear and complete explanations of choices. The only question arises as to why the review up to 2009 was not completed for the analysis for this manuscript given that on page 22 they note an update of the literature over the 2008 to March 2009 period. It would seem that it would be wise to include these papers in the full analysis but no explanation is given.

3. The data are strong and well controlled and properly presented.

4. The discussion and conclusions are very well balanced and supported by the data. The authors strongly and, I believe, with great validity argue for a major change in the approach to assessment of barriers - ie to cease using the BARRIERS scale. This conclusion is, I believe, a major contribution to the field.

Major Compulsory Revisions:

1. The insertion on page 22 about an update to the literature search for 2008-March 2009 is not explained and should be. It would be most beneficial to include this data in the analysis. The alternative (and to me satisfactory) approach would be to provide some rationale for why the search strategy for the study went only to 2007 for a paper to be submitted in 2009 and why the authors felt the need to update the search using only some of the same search strategies and some of the analyses.

Minor Essential Revisions:

1. The first sentence of the manuscript makes an unsubstantiated claim that the 'provision of evidence-based nursing care is based on the assumption...' It is not clear to me that statement is always true. I would suggest that the wording be changed to 'The call to provide evidence-based care is based on the assumption...'

2. Some typographical or grammatical errors:
   abstract - p 3 (non specific should be non-specific);
   page 6, end of first paragraph - 'indicating' should be 'indicated';
page 6 second paragraph - line 2 - 'has' should be 'have'
page 6 second paragraph - line 6 - 'discus' should be 'discuss'
page 6 second paragraph - last line - 'questions' should be 'question'
page 11 - top line - 'were' should be 'was'
page 14 - top line - not clear why the referencing system changes here to include both the year of publication and the number of the reference
page 16 - top paragraph - sentence dealing with subscale mean values - punctuation is variable and needs to be corrected.
page 17 - 1st paragraph under heading 'Does the BARRIERS Scale ...' - line 3 - the word 'studied' should be inserted after Fink and colleagues [40] or some other punctuation should be used.

Tables 3 and 4 - 'Summery' should be 'Summary'

Table 4
- numbers under Sampling on my copy are 5,6 and 7 rather than 1,2,3 and the sub-questions under the third question are also mis-numbered as 1,b and c
- the scoring in the sections on design and control of confounders is not clear to me

Table 5
- in the column headed 'Nurse (8 items)mean - there is a question mark (?) after the mean for the Hommelstad & Ruland paper
- last line of note - refers to highest and lowest values being 'boltic' - does this mean 'bolded'?

Level of interest: An article of outstanding merit and interest 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.