Reviewer’s report

Title: Validation of a 5-item tool to measure patient assessment of clinician compassion in the emergency department

Version: 1 Date: 16 Sep 2019

Reviewer: Bernard P Chang

Reviewer's report:

Thank you for allowing me to review this paper. This was a cross sectional prospective study attempting to validate a brief compassion measure for completion of are in the ED. Overall, I enjoyed reading this psychometric paper, and believe this may be a useful tool in the ED setting. Comments below

-Compassion as previous work that the authors of this paper (Roberts) and others (Chang et al 2016: perceptions of clinician communication and hallway care) have noted the impact of the ED environment on psychological perceptions of care. It seems this scale is focused on disposition/state/trait aspects of the perceptions of compassion. Do the authors think that the ED environment may also moderate (mediate?) some of these effects? The authors make note of that in the last paragraph of the paper, but perhaps they could expound on this in a sentence or two talking about future work looking at the utility of their tool for identifying modifiable variables in the acute care setting to impact scores on the measure

-Validated in English speaking, would be curious to see the psychometric properties in other non-english speaking populations such as Spanish. Perhaps a sentence in the discussion to this would help raise interest among readers for future work

-there appeared to be differences in completion rates among the different sites, ranging from under 1% for WUMC 5% for CUH to about 10% in HCMC. Do we have any qualitative information about reasons for noncompliance? I don't think a sensitivity analysis needs to be done, but it would be useful for readers to get a better sense of non-completion

-How stable do you think the 5 item tool is? Would it be sensitive to assess real time changes in compassion (or within a hospital stay) or do you think it's something akin to other behavioral measures that are usually assessed over a longer time period. I ask, as this may have some interesting implications for the tool in assessing real time stress/compassion both in patient perception as well as provider factors (burnout, etc).
Are the methods appropriate and well described?
If not, please specify what is required in your comments to the authors.

Yes

Does the work include the necessary controls?
If not, please specify which controls are required in your comments to the authors.

Yes

Are the conclusions drawn adequately supported by the data shown?
If not, please explain in your comments to the authors.

Yes

Are you able to assess any statistics in the manuscript or would you recommend an additional statistical review?
If an additional statistical review is recommended, please specify what aspects require further assessment in your comments to the editors.

I am able to assess the statistics

Quality of written English
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