Reviewer's report

Title: Perioperative Nursing in Public University Hospitals: An Ethnography.

Version: 3 Date: 18 July 2014

Reviewer: Clare Whitfield

Reviewer's report:

Summary
This ethnography explores the relationship between differing levels of technical expertise and differing views if the patient in OR nurse practice. Technical skills are categorised as either ‘technical flair’ or technically unskilled/technophobe and care skills as either viewing the patient as a ‘human being’ or as an ‘object’. The interaction between these categories gives rise to three levels: interaction level, where OR nurses have ‘technical flair’ and treat the patient as a ‘human being’; interaction declined level, where the nurse has technical know-how but views the patient as an ‘object’, alternatively, the nurse is technophobic but views the patient as a ‘human being’, and finally interactional failed level where the OR nurse is technically unskilled and views the patient as an ‘object’. The interactional level is reflected in practice that is characterised by flexibility and excellence. Evidence of the remaining categories—interaction declined, which represents rigid and inflexible practice, and interactional failed, which includes the notion of professional isolation and limited collaboration could highlight problems during recruitment and in maximising retention of OR nurses.

Exploration of this area is timely, certainly with an increase in technology used across many different nursing specialisms. Taking an ethnographic approach provides an insight into the processes taking place during the day-to-day experiences of OR nurses and their patients and allows an opportunity to differentiate between different qualities of practice. This approach is potentially useful and could be used to flag up a need for further training and mentoring and other leadership issues.

1 Findings also have some potential in relation to other areas where technology is increasing- practice of nurses using Telehealth and technology to support older people in their homes may also benefit from this analysis as well as other highly technical areas such as High Dependency Units and Intensive (Coronary) care.

2 The discussion is closely linked to the analysis of the data- and this is well presented, providing evidence for claims made. The limitations are clearly discussed.

Minor Essential Revisions

3 An explanation of the methodological approach is included- however, a rationale for this choice is not fully explained
4 The process of analysis is described, although it is not clear how many researchers took part in the different stages and this may have implications for level of robustness.

5 There are a limited number of syntax/grammar issues (for example p18 line 431)

Discretionary Revisions

NA

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

**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:**

No competing interests