Reviewer’s report

Title: Validation of the Intermountain Patient Perception of Quality (PPQ) Survey among Survivors of an Intensive Care Unit Admission

Version: 2 Date: 10 February 2015

Reviewer: Tim Benson

Reviewer’s report:

This paper is likely to be of interest to those with an interest in the field. This study has a good sample size. However, for those with limited statistical skills it is not easy to follow. More explanation of PCA in particular would be useful.

Cronbach alpha is reported for each of the sub domains but not for the questionnaire as a whole. Given that many respondents tend to answer most questions the same way, this should be added. A high Cronbach alpha of over 0.9 usually means that two or more questions are asking essentially the same question using different words, and thus the number of questions might be reduced. This is stated in the conclusions, but more detail should be provided.

It is not clear from the analysis how well correlated each item is within and between domains. It is stated that the nursing component explains 58% of the variance implying that r~ 0.76. A correlation matrix showing all inter-item correlations would make this clearer.

The questionnaire is provided in supplementary material. The presentation would be clearer if more details of the questionnaire were provided in the text, such as the number of questions asked and the word count, to indicate the level of respondent burden (which may help explain the relatively poor response rates in spite of up to 5 attempts to contact). It would be useful to report response rate distributions for whatever part of the sample this was available for. It would be useful to have some comment about this.

The paper mentions differences between different raters, but does not provide detailed figures about these differences. In unpublished studies in which I have been involved (not in ICUs), we have found significant differences between patients own ratings and those of proxies. References to the literature on this might be useful.

Although outside the stated scope of the study, it would have been useful to know whether the instrument was sensitive either to differences between ICUs or over time. Clearly if the instrument did not identify such differences, it would be difficult to justify its use.

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests
Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

Declaration of competing interests:

I am a director of a company that provides patient experience survey tools. but otherwise have no competing interests