Author's response to reviews

Title: Do the structural and process quality indicators predict the outcome indicators? A cross-sectional survey to investigate the quality of nutritional care in Tuscan (Italy) nursing homes.

Authors:

Guglielmo Bonaccorsi (guglielmo.bonaccorsi@unifi.it)
Francesca Collini (francesca.collini@ars.toscana.it)
Mariangela Castagnoli (mariangela.castagnoli@virgilio.it)
Mauro Di Bari (mauro.dibari@unifi.it)
Maria Chiara Cavallini (mariachiara.cavallini@unifi.it)
Nicoletta Zaffarana (nicolettazaffarana@alice.it)
Pasquale Pepe (pasquale_pepe1@virgilio.it)
Alessandro Mugelli (alessandro.mugelli@unifi.it)
Ersilia Lucenteforte (ersilia.lucenteforte@unifi.it)
Alfredo Vannacci (alfredo.vannacci@unifi.it)
Chiara Lorini (chiara.lorini@unifi.it)

Version: 2 Date: 30 October 2014

Author's response to reviews: see over
Object: Submission of the manuscript entitled “Do the structural and process quality indicators predict the outcome indicators? The quality of nutritional care in Tuscan (Italy) nursing homes.” (Authors: Guglielmo Bonaccorsi, Francesca Collini, Mariangela Castagnoli, Mauro Di Bari, Maria Chiara Cavallini, Nicoletta Zaffarana, Pasquale Pepe, Ersilia Lucenteforte, Alfredo Vannacci, Chiara Lorini)

Dear Editor,

I am glad to submit the above manuscript to your attention for publication in Health Services Research.

The study aimed to evaluate the predictors, either individual or related to the quality of care, of malnutrition risk among the elderly residents and to evaluate the appropriate weighting of the structural and process indicators in predicting the outcome indicators of malnutrition, controlling for individual risk factors. The study has been conducted in a sample of Tuscan nursing homes and also aimed to describe structure, process, and outcome indicators of nutritional care in these structures. The results indicates that efforts should be made to improve the quality of the nutritional care provided. Among the process and structural indicators included in our study, the only one with a role in predicting malnutrition risk after adjusting for case mix is the availability of a scale suitable to weigh residents even in the presence of mobility restriction; this tool also seems to compensate for the lack of malnutrition screening tools or, more generally, for the absence of written documents (protocols, guidelines) that provide advice for assessing body weight.

We believe that the results could be useful in improving quality of care in nursing homes.

None of the material in the manuscript is included in another manuscript, has been published previously, or is currently under consideration for publication elsewhere. The study has been conducted according to the principles of the Helsinki Declaration and was approved by the local ethics committee, as affirmed in the Methods section of the manuscript. Each author has participated sufficiently in the work to take public responsibility for the content of the paper and has approved the final version of the manuscript. The project was financed by the Italian Ministry of Health. There are no conflict of interest.

We look forward to the referees evaluation, in the hope of a positive reply as to acceptability for publication.
Authorship

Guglielmo Bonaccorsi: conception and design of the study; generation, collection, assembly, analysis and interpretation of data; drafting and revision of the manuscript; approval of the final version of the manuscript.

Francesca Collini: conception and design of the study; generation, collection, assembly, analysis and interpretation of data; revision of the manuscript; approval of the final version of the manuscript.

Mariangela Castagnoli: conception and design of the study; generation, collection, and interpretation of data; revision of the manuscript; approval of the final version of the manuscript.

Mauro Di Bari: conception and design of the study; generation, analysis and interpretation of data; revision of the manuscript; approval of the final version of the manuscript.

Maria Chiara Cavallini: conception and design of the study; generation, analysis and interpretation of data; revision of the manuscript; approval of the final version of the manuscript.

Nicoletta Zaffarana: conception and design of the study; generation, collection, assembly, and interpretation of data; revision of the manuscript; approval of the final version of the manuscript.

Pasquale Pepe: assembly, analysis and interpretation of data; drafting and revision of the manuscript; approval of the final version of the manuscript.

Alessandro Mugelli: conception and design of the study; generation, analysis and interpretation of data; revision of the manuscript; approval of the final version of the manuscript.

Ersilia Lucenteforte: conception and design of the study; generation, analysis and interpretation of data; revision of the manuscript; approval of the final version of the manuscript.

Alfredo Vannacci: conception and design of the study; generation, analysis and interpretation of data; revision of the manuscript; approval of the final version of the manuscript.

Chiara Lorini: conception and design of the study; generation, collection, assembly, analysis and interpretation of data; drafting and revision of the manuscript; approval of the final version of the manuscript.

With our best regards

Chiara Lorini and co-Authors

Corresponding author:
Dr Chiara Lorini, Department of Health Science, University of Florence, viale GB Morgagni 48, 50134 Florence, Italy, tel. 00390552751065; e-mail: chiara.lorini@unifi.it