Author’s response to reviews

Title: Nurse staffing in large general hospitals in China: An observational study

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Author’s response to reviews:

Dear Editor,

Thank you very much for your attention and the reviewers’ evaluation and comments on our paper. We have revised the manuscript according to your advices and detailed suggestions. Enclosed please find the responses to the reviewers.

Thank you very much for all your help and looking forward to hearing from you soon.

Best regards

Sincerely

Weiyan Jian
Responses by the Authors to the reviewers’ comments

Reviewer 4 Comments for Author

1. Page 1, line 4-5, I don't know how nurse staffing reflect the level of nursing management. I suggest you to reconsider this inappropriate sentence.

R: Thank you for the comments. This question has been revised according to your suggestion.

2. Page 2, line 32-33, the "inefficient use of resources, and unequal access to health care" seem to be irrelevant to your topic.

R: Thank you for the comments. This question has been revised according to your suggestion.

3. Page 2, line 43-44, full name is needed when you first mention NTP. Also, please revise the abstract section.

R: Thank you for the comments. This question has been revised according to your suggestion.

4. Page 2, line 57-58, definition and reference for "Eleventh Five-Year" is needed. Also, what's the relationship between this plan and nurse number? Please clarify.

R: Thank you for the comments. This question has been revised according to your suggestion.

5. Page 2, line 60, add a time point after "1.35 million".

R: Thank you for the comments. This question has been revised according to your suggestion.

6. Page 3, line 3, add a time point after "4.45 million".

R: Thank you for the comments. This question has been revised according to your suggestion.

7. Page 3, line 11-12, "health care workforce" or "nurse workforce"?

R: Thank you for the comments. This question has been revised according to your suggestion.
R: Thank you for the comments. This question has been revised according to your suggestion.

R: Thank you for the comments. This question has been revised according to your suggestion.

10. Page 4, line 45, a reference is needed after "patient safety".
R: Thank you for the comments. Relevant references have been added.

11. Page 3, paragraph 2, pay attention to the citation in text. The format should be Surname (year), for example, Aiken et al. (2014). Revise throughout.
R: Thank you for the comments. This question has been revised according to your suggestion.

12. Page 4, line 26, a reference is needed after "staffing of nurses".
R: Thank you for the comments. Relevant references have been added.

13. Page 4, line 45, a reference is needed after "complex conditions".
R: Thank you for the comments. Relevant references have been added.

14. Page 4, paragraph 2, add more description about the status of NTP ratios in Tertiary A hospitals to declare why your study is necessary.
R: Thank you for the comments. Relevant references have been added.

15. Page 4, line 50, "nurse to patient ratio (NTP ratio)", just "NTP ratio" is fine.
R: Thank you for the comments. This question has been revised according to your suggestion.
16. Page 4, paragraph 3, still no background information about your aim (2)-(4).

R: Thank you for the comments. This question has been revised according to your suggestion.

17. Page 5, line 47-48, a references is needed after "nursing resource".

R: Thank you for the comments. Relevant references have been added.

18. Page 5, line 53, "in other countries", please clarify which countries and give references.

R: Thank you for the comments. Relevant references have been added.

19. Page 6, where did the patient and nurse numbers from? Who collected/reported them?

R: Thank you for the comments. For this cross-sectional study, a database established by the National Centre for Nursing Care Quality Control, which conducted a national survey of the staffing of nurses in China mainland in 2017, numbers of patients and nurses were collected by National Centre for Nursing Care Quality Control.

20. Page 6, line 20, I don't know why you collected "number of beds during the day and night", did they make a difference?

R: Thank you for the comments. Data analyzed are the actual number of open beds at different time points which collected by National Centre for Nursing Care Quality Control, little difference between day and night. Presenting this part of data is intended to provide a fuller picture of the size of departments and hospitals.

21. Page 10, Table 4, I think this table is redundant. Information has been given in Table 2 and 3.

R: Thank you for the comments. This question has been revised according to your suggestion.

R: Thank you for the comments. Relevant references have been added.

23. Page 11, line 6-9, "This may be… to assign nurses", please add further explanations to this sentence. The sentence does not make sense to me.

R: Thank you for the comments. This question has been revised according to your suggestion.

24. Page 11, line 20-23, add a reference. Besides, the sentence here repeated with the content on page 12, paragraph 1.

R: Thank you for the comments. This question has been revised according to your suggestion.

25. Page 11, line 47-53, "This may be…", please add further explanations. How is nurse staffing relate to the "regional economic…."?

R: Thank you for the comments. This question has been revised according to your suggestion.

26. Page 11, line 56, add the standard and relevant references.

R: Thank you for the comments. Relevant references have been added.

27. Page 12, line 28-31, this sentence does not make sense to me. Please clarify.

R: Thank you for the comments. This question has been revised according to your suggestion.

28. Page 12, line 50, add a reference here after "national government".

R: Thank you for the comments. Relevant references have been added.

29. Page 13, line 28-29, The "three shifts" of nursing should be introduced earlier as background information about nursing shifts in Chinese hospitals.
R: Thank you for the comments. This question has been revised according to your suggestion. As “However, there are three shifts for nurses in Chinese hospitals, but standards have not established for different shifts…”.

30. Page 13, line 39-40. Please be cautious when you state "nursing staffs at night may potentially influence patient safety" as your conclusion, because this is not explored in your study.

R: Thank you for the comments. This question has been revised according to your suggestion.