Reviewer’s report

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

Version: 0 Date: 04 Jun 2019

Reviewer: Walter Sermeus

Reviewer's report:

Interesting article about a subject of growing interest worldwide. It is interesting to see the application in China.

In literature both metrics are used patient-to-nurse ratio and nurse-to-patient ratio

p.2 line24 "Date was collected with questionnaires among" should be "Data were collected with questionnaires among..."

p.2 line48 "There is a large gap compared to that in the US and Australia, which had established the mandatory standards of NTP ratios". It is not completely true. In the USA mandated NTP ratios are implemented in California; in Australia, legislation has been introduced in Victoria and recently in Queensland.

p.6 not clear what class A tertiary (level 3) hospitals are and what they do and how they compare with other types of hospitals. How many of these hospitals are there in China? Why only these hospitals were included in the study and not the other hospitals?

p7 What are responsible nurses? Is it the same as registered nurses? What other types of nurses are there in China? What about their numbers? Why only these responsible nurses in the study and not other types?

p7 What are: treating/dispensing nurses, lead nurses?

p10 table 2: give also p-value and not only chi-square value, formulate legend repeating that the test is a Kruskal-Wallis test

Level of interest
Please indicate how interesting you found the manuscript:

An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English
Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

Needs some language corrections before being published
Declaration of competing interests

Please complete a declaration of competing interests, considering the following questions:

1. Have you in the past five years received reimbursements, fees, funding, or salary from an organisation that may in any way gain or lose financially from the publication of this manuscript, either now or in the future?

2. Do you hold any stocks or shares in an organisation that may in any way gain or lose financially from the publication of this manuscript, either now or in the future?

3. Do you hold or are you currently applying for any patents relating to the content of the manuscript?

4. Have you received reimbursements, fees, funding, or salary from an organization that holds or has applied for patents relating to the content of the manuscript?

5. Do you have any other financial competing interests?

6. Do you have any non-financial competing interests in relation to this paper?

If you can answer no to all of the above, write 'I declare that I have no competing interests' below. If your reply is yes to any, please give details below.

I declare that I have no competing interests

I agree to the open peer review policy of the journal. I understand that my name will be included on my report to the authors and, if the manuscript is accepted for publication, my named report including any attachments I upload will be posted on the website along with the authors' responses. I agree for my report to be made available under an Open Access Creative Commons CC-BY license (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/). I understand that any comments which I do not wish to be included in my named report can be included as confidential comments to the editors, which will not be published.

I agree to the open peer review policy of the journal