

Review of: "Knowledge, Perception and Challenges of Implementing Nutrition Screening: A Survey of Healthcare Professionals"

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Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.

Authors examined HCP's knowledge, perception, and challenges in implementing pre-operative nutritional screening for surgical patients. The background was fairly well laid and the need for the study was substantially rationalized. However, authors would need to make the paper more robust and their writing clearer. Here are my concerns:

TITLE

Would authors recast the title to include the beneficiaries of nutrition screening?

INTRODUCTION

It is not clear how a study of this nature would generate data for *standardized nutrition care pathway*! Authors may want to clarify their point here.

OBJECTIVES AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- The study objectives did not come out very clearly!
- Would authors raise some research questions fundamental to their study?

METHODOLOGY

- Would authors state when the study was carried out (as mentioned in the abstract)?
- Authors sought to examine three main themes in this study: knowledge, perception, and challenges. However, they did not explain in clear terms how each theme was examined and scored. Readers should also not be left to determine what questions are meant for what theme!
- Authors did not state how the questionnaires were administered before the data was transferred into "softcopy". I presume the questionnaire was paper based; if so, how many copies were distributed and how many were retrieved? If there were missing data, how were they handled?
- Would authors state the cadre of staff statutorily responsible for performing NS in HSAAS? If such duty is not designated to any staff cadre, I think authors should say so.
- Would authors state the sample size for this study? And how was it arrived at?
- Would authors make their analysis statement richer than what they have?

- Analyzing data using only frequencies and proportions may appear too simplistic. Would authors expand their analysis to include inferential statistics?
- Authors may want to analyze individual scores in each theme, and then compute the mean. Means can then be compared within categorical variables.

RESULTS

- Knowledge, perception, and challenges are at the core of this study. Yet authors did not clearly distinguish the outcome of these three themes.
- Would authors avoid repeating in prose the exact figures that appeared in tables? Prose should only highlight important patterns and trends, without duplicating figures in tables *verbatim*!
- Would authors avoid making statements of *methodology* and *discussion* when writing result prose?
- Table 1
 - Most of the respondents were nurses! Could this explain the skewed sex distribution?
 - It appears too many staff cadres were recruited for the study, yet the response was low for all except nurses. To my mind, the role an HCP plays in NS should inform the choice of the target population. Authors may want to restrict their respondents to nurses and doctors who work in the specified wards and departments.
 - It is curious to see that only four doctors responded in this survey. It would seem that nurses were the primary target population. How many doctors received the questionnaire in the first place? And how many of them returned the instrument? Or are nurses primarily responsible for performing NS at HSAAS? If yes, authors should say so in their methodology. Notwithstanding, more doctors may need to be surveyed to enrich the outcome of the study.
- ‘3’ appears too small for ‘other’ to be non-specific!
- The use of “*significant proportion*” seems inappropriate, as p-value or confidence interval was not calculated!
- Table 2
 - “*Aware on Malnutrition Guidelines*”. Aware of malnutrition guidelines? OR Aware that malnutrition guidelines exist?
 - “Awareness of malnutrition guidelines” may not be rightly examined with a ‘Yes’ or ‘No’ answer as shown in this table.
 - Would authors state in exact terms how the knowledge and perception questions were asked? The ‘questions’ as they appear in this table seem ambiguous!

DISCUSSION

- It may not be appropriate for authors to compare surgical staff in their study with GPs in other studies. If previous data on surgical staff is limited, authors should say so. If they must compare the two cadres, then the caveat should also be discussed.
- Would authors clarify what their own NS rate was? And how is it comparable with that of the *‘multicentric’* study?
- It would seem authors paid more attention to findings from other studies without relating them well with their own

results.

- Authors may want to avoid being certain about what their findings mean.
- When authors think the result of a previous study is “*in line*”, then the figure (in the previous) should be similar to what they (authors) found!
- Strength
 - Authors highlighted strengths that seem different from what the study was about!

CONCLUSIONS

- Before concluding whether respondents’ knowledge was adequate or not, would authors define “knowledge adequacy” in their methodology?
- How would authors best describe implementation of NS in their study? “lack of implementation” or “poor implementation”?
- Before concluding whether respondents’ perception was positive or not, would authors define what “positive perception” means?
- Opening a statement of conclusion with “*Basically,*” does not seem appropriate!

ABSTRACT

- Authors words: “*short practices*”
 - This is not clear!
- The result section is not clear enough!
- The conclusion is not strong enough!

Other concerns:

- Authors should check that abbreviations are written in full before subsequent use.
- Authors should check that statements of other authors are appropriately referenced.
- Authors words: “*The exclusion criteria were non-HCPs working in the study location*”.
 - This statement may not be necessary!
- Authors should check that there are no repetitions in their writing.