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Molly C. Dougherty, PhD, RN, FAAN
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Dear Dr. Dougherty

I commend Drs. Lynn, McMillen, and Sidani on their article, "Understanding and Measuring Patients' Assessment of the Quality of Nursing Care," and on their meticulous work developing an important scale. The measurement world, in my opinion, can never have enough good work of this kind.

I would like to take the opportunity to correct two inaccuracies in the article. First, the qualitative study of patients' perceptions of high quality cancer nursing care (Radwin, 2000) identified and described eight attributes of such care; Lynn et al.'s article did not mention the attributes of caring and rapport. Second, and more important, my colleagues and I "moved beyond patient satisfaction," to use Lynn and colleagues' phrase, in developing and testing the Oncology Patients' Perceptions of Quality Nursing Scale or OPPQNCS (Radwin, Alster, & Rubin, 2003). In our report, we explained that the OPPQNCS was developed as an alternative to patient satisfaction scales (pp. 283-284) and further made the argument that the OPPQNCS was a measure of patient-centered nursing care (pp. 288-289). Indeed, the OPPQNCS was used to examine the equity of patient-centered nursing care (Radwin, 2003). It was puzzling, then, that Lynn et al. classified the OPPQNCS as a patient satisfaction measure (p. 160) rather than as a measure of patient-centered care.

Last, Dr. Lynn and colleagues characterized the OPPQNCS as a population-specific measure. This assertion reflected what was published at the time. A very recently published study reports on use of the OPPQNCS with hospitalized Finnish medical and surgical patients (Suhonen, Schmidt, & Radwin, 2007). Psychometric properties were assessed using multi-trait multi-method techniques and found acceptable. Moreover, we have received official requests to use the OPPQNCS from numerous American and international nurse clinicians and researchers. Some users proposed to measure patient-centered nursing care in the non-oncology setting. It is our hope to pool and analyze these data so that we can report the usefulness of the OPPQNCS beyond the oncology population.

In sum, I was most pleased to read the report about the PAQS-ACV and I appreciate the opportunity to clarify a few points about the OPPQNCS. The more deliberation about and opportunities to include patients in the measurement of their care quality, the better!

Sincerely,

Laurel E. Radwin, RN, Ph.D.
Yvonne L. Munn, Nurse Researcher

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