

RESPONSE TO LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Validity and reliability of the new Canadian Nutrition Screening Tool in the ‘real-world’ hospital setting

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In December 2014, we published an article in the *European Journal of Clinical Nutrition* (manuscript number 2014EJCN0703R), in which we presented the results of the two studies conducted to assess the validity and reliability of the Canadian Nutrition Screening Tool (CNST) in the ‘real-world’ hospital setting. A letter has been sent recently to the Editor of the *EJCN* by Dr Sabour who was pointing out the need for using an appropriate methodology, which in fact, was used in the paper.

Among the others, he underlined the importance of knowing that reliability and validity are two completely different methodological issues that should not be confused. The writer also noted that the weighted kappa should be used with caution, as well as pointed out the relationship between kappa statistic and prevalence of condition. Finally, he mentioned that the positive predictive value and negative predictive value should be among the tests to evaluate the validity.

A clear distinction was made in our paper regarding the terminology and methodology used. Inter-rater reliability was assessed using regular Cohen’s kappa (not the weighted kappa), a statistic commonly used for this purpose because it allows to test whether the observed agreement rate can be explained by chance only. Positive and negative predictive values were used to assess validity along with sensitivity and specificity. Prevalence of condition (malnutrition) was reported in the article to ensure

the accurate interpretation of the given reliability and validity measures.

We also noticed that Dr Sabour was pointing out the similar concerns by sending letters, in many cases with closely worded paragraphs, to editors of different journals, which has already been noted in one of the responses to his letters.¹

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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REFERENCE

1 van Wijk AJ, Lobbezoo F, Hoogstraten J. Letter to the editor – Authors’ reply to the comment by Sabour. *Eur J Pain* 2013; 17: 462.

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