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Response to Hayden and Glenn (2011)

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We thank the authors Hayden and Glenn for commenting on our paper 'The introduction of a nursing guideline on depression at psychogeriatric nursing home wards: Effects on Certified Nurse Assistants', which was published in the *International Journal of Nursing Studies* (Verkaik et al., 2011). In our paper we conclude that the introduction of the nursing guideline 'Depression in dementia' had a positive, though small, significant effect on the perceived professional autonomy of Certified Nurse Assistants. We found that effects could probably be enlarged if non-Certified Nurse Assistants and nursing helpers were also trained, and managers paid more attention to the necessary conditions for successful introduction.

Hayden and Glenn do not agree with these conclusions, and state that the correct conclusion would be that the introduction of guidelines on depression did not have any beneficial effects on Certified Nurse Assistants. Therefore, such nursing guidelines should not be administered.

We would like to reply by first explaining that positive effects on Certified Nurse Assistants concerned a secondary aim of the guideline introduction, while a reduction of depression in residents with dementia was the primary aim. A reduction of depression was realized, as we showed in another paper (Verkaik et al., 2011a). Even if guideline introduction had positive effects on patients only and no effects on Certified Nurse Assistants, further implementation can be recommended. However, we did show that the introduction of the guideline had positive effects on Certified Nurse Assistants' general work autonomy from pre-test to follow-up, despite the small dip in work autonomy at post-test. Differences in baseline autonomy between the experimental and control group are taken into account in the multilevel analyses, and trends were tested in repeated measurements rather than testing baseline or post test scores separately. Hayden and Glenn additionally comment that the sample size was inflated, by our mentioning both the number of Certified Nurse Assistants and the number of patients participating in the trial.

However, we would like to emphasize that the number of patients is only mentioned in the Methods section of the paper, after the number of participating Certified Nurse Assistants has been described. Moreover, the abstract makes reference only to the number of participating Certified Nurse Assistants.

Questions are also raised by Hayden and Glenn regarding the validity of the scales for autonomy and workload. The reliability and validity of the scales were established. Cronbachs alpha is 0.89 for the workload subscale and 0.82 for the subscale on autonomy (van Veldhoven and Meijman, 1994). Concurrent validity was confirmed (van Veldhoven, 1996) by testing agreement of the scales with work stress models like the vitamin model by Warr (1994). Our conclusions still hold up, and we hope they will inspire others in this field of evidence based nursing care.

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