

Author's response to reviews

Title: Experts' attitudes towards medical futility: An empirical survey from Japan

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Author's response to reviews: see over

Dear Editor in Chief

With thanks to you and the reviewers for the valuable comments, we have revised the paper and following is point-by-point responses to their comments (in red color, italic). Fortunately their comments have improved the paper and we are grateful for that.

Sincerely yours
Alireza Bagheri

Reviewer's report

Reviewer:Tore Nilstun

Reviewer's report:

General

Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)

Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)

1. There are a lot of numbers, and I think that the article would be easier to read if there were no decimals. These decimals also give the wrong impression of precision.

We have accommodated this comment in the revised manuscript.

2. In the Abstract you could either drop the number or the per cent.

The percent has been deleted.

3. In Material and Method, line three: You should write "The final questionnaire"

Corrected

4. In Material and Method, a) and b): Your definitions are somewhat unusual, but if they were used in the questionnaire, they have to be used in the article.

5. Table 1. Should be: "35%<55" *Corrected*

6. In Attitudes towards physiological and evaluative futility, line 14 from the bottom: You write "deference" but I feel that "difference" would be the correct word.

The above mentioned points have been corrected.

7. In Discussion, line 8 from the bottom: The word "paternalistic" is defined in different ways. You could even say that the family is behaving paternalistic towards the patient. A short definition is needed. *More explanation has been added (page 8).*

Thank you very much.

Reviewer's report

Reviewer:Noritoshi Tanida

Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)

This reviewer suggests that the discussion should mention at least the latest references such as "Medical futility in end-of-life care: report of the Council on Ethical and Judicial Affairs. JAMA 1999;281:937-941," "Palda VA, Bowman KW, McLean RF, Chapman MG. "Futile" care: do we provide it? Why? A semistructured, Canada-wide survey of intensive care unit doctors and nurses. J Crit Care. 2005;20:207-213" and others if necessary, and also the Hoboro Hospital case in Hokkaido, in conjunction with the present findings.

The Hokkaido Hoboro case and also some data from the suggested article have been added to the revised manuscript (in Discussion section page 9).

Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)

1) The word "experts" is ambiguous, perhaps better identify subjects as "the members of the Japan Association for Bioethics" in the title and the text.

In the text, the target group has been clearly introduced.

2) One word "deference" in the Result section should have been "difference."

It has been corrected.

Thank you very much.
