Reviewer's report

Title: The death of a patient: a model for reflection in GP training

Version: 2 Date: 10 April 2010

Reviewer: Reginald Deschepper

Reviewer's report:

I thank the authors for their reply. Some of their answers are not very convincing, especially re. my suggestion for major compulsory revision (“The title, research questions, method and results do not optimally fit”). The authors changed the title but did not acknowledge the limitations of the sample in the Discussion section.

The authors respond that “the only difference as a SCEN-doctor is that they have had a 3-days’ training in performing SCEN-consultation”. I would not minimize this fact. A possible selection bias has not only to do with this training, but also with the fact that these GP are experienced physicians and interested in end-of-life care in general and euthanasia in particular. Hence, their view might considerably differ from e.g. the experiences of starting GPs when confronted with dying patients. Probably the latter GPs will feel much more uncertain about how to deal with this situation and the death of a patient may have a much greater emotional and professional impact.

I would recommend stating this important limitation of the article explicitly in the Discussion section as a limitation.

Other discretionary revisions:
- p 10 (Results): “The main themes are to be understood in the Wittgensteinian sense… [14].

I would suggest to move this to the Discussion and to explain what you mean by ‘Wittgensteinian sense’.

- p 6: the sentences “In qualitative research the aim is not to select at random a representative number of participants. The aim is to collect as many views as possible either coming from a small number or a larger number of participants.” Can be omitted as the author state on p 7 that “GPs were randomly chosen”.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being published

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.
Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests