Reviewer's report

Title: Experiencing dementia in a rural setting in northern Tanzania

Version: 1 Date: 30 September 2013

Reviewer: Melissa Lindeman

Reviewer's report:

This is an interesting paper that will add to the growing body of knowledge about different understandings of dementia to help target information and awareness programs, and to assist with developing pathways of care and support services, particularly in resource-poor settings. I have some suggestions for amendments, below.

Minor essential revisions

1. The final sentence under "introduction and background" on page 3 is not referenced, and I assume that it is a finding of the current study. If this is the case, then it does not belong in the introduction, but in the discussion and conclusion. Otherwise, the statement needs to be referenced, and the wording amended to place it in the context of current study.

2. Please include a reference for "content analysis approach" in the section "data analysis" (page 5) and include more detail about what was done.

3. The results section needs to be organized differently so that themes (and sub themes) are clearer and supported more clearly with examples of quotes. This includes placing demographic information about participants in a separate section (a table format for information about participants may be easier to read and more useful to interpret the findings that follow?). An introductory paragraph in "results" would be useful to highlight the themes and the information that follows (presented as sub-headings) in this section.

4. The wording of the first paragraph of the discussion section needs to be tightened for clarity.

5. Information in the discussion under the sub-heading "social demographic conditions" belongs in results under demographic information (see point 3 above). The information presented here is largely already reported and is not discussed in any depth under this sub-heading. The last sentence under this sub-heading could be expanded in the discussion section. What do the authors mean by a "symbiotic relationship" and what is the significance of this for their recommendations?

Discretionary

5. I would like to see a clearer rationale as to why the methodology was selected, including a more detailed explanation of what they mean by "social model" as opposed to "biomedical perspective". This may seem obvious to the authors but a clearer explanation of the differences as they see them will help to provide the
rationale (and aims) of the study.

6. Findings/results need to be clearly identified as themes. In general, percentages are not necessary as the study sample is small (25 interviewees). As this is a paper reporting qualitative research, the authors could concentrate more on showing pertinent examples of quotes to illustrate the themes, rather than detailing numbers of respondents. The style of writing is more akin to the reporting of descriptive quantitative, rather than qualitative, data.

**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