Reviewer's report

Title: Prevalence and Risk Factors of Depressive Symptoms in a Canadian Palliative Home Care Population: A Cross-Sectional Study

Version: 10 Date: 20 December 2013

Reviewer: Laura Goodwin

Reviewer's report:

The authors have addressed most of the issues that were raised in relation to the first draft, but there are still some issues remaining which have not been addressed and I have a couple of further comments in relation to the updated analyses which have been undertaken.

Major compulsory revisions:

1. I am still not convinced by the justification of the IVs in the model based on their statistical association with the DV. Particularly given that further items are subsequently excluded dependent on the associations between the IVs (to avoid multicollinearity).

2. On my advice the authors have now run polychoric correlations as well as Spearman's, however, it seems slightly strange to now report on both types of correlation and might it be better to choose one and justify this decision.

3. I have some issues with the description of the missing data analysis. From the overview provided in the methods it isn't completely clear whether the description refers to the multiple imputation or if it is about the logistic regression for the main analyses e.g. 'risk factors were considered sig. in the multiple imputation analysis if they were selected in at least 50% of the model runs' - is this referring to the 50 imputations that were conducted? I think that this could be clarified as I am not sure it would be clear for most readers.

4. Given that the authors have now conducted their analyses in imputed data as well as the complete case analysis, it seems odd that the sample characteristics only refer to the 3734 from the complete case analysis and don't know show the imputed %.

Minor essential revisions:

1. The conclusions section of the abstract is quite long and do the authors think that all of these conclusions can be made from their results or could there potentially be an over interpretation of this cross-sectional data?

2. Within the measures section, which is all about the inter RAIC PC some subheadings would be helpful as it is quite long and this would make it more readable.

3. The conclusions section in the main report are a page long and could probably
be shorter.

**Level of interest:** An article of importance in its field

**Quality of written English:** Not suitable for publication unless extensively edited

**Statistical review:** Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests