Reviewer's report

Title: Meanings of existential uncertainty and certainty for people diagnosed with cancer and receiving palliative treatment: a lifeworld phenomenological study

Version: 2 Date: 24 November 2013

Reviewer: Bridget Johnston

Reviewer's report:

Major Compulsory Revisions

1. Redo abstract in line with other changes as listed below
2. Add more thorough explanation re 'existential' in literature review. This is particularly important as term not used by the participants
3. more explanation/detail needed re methodology and methods. There is some blurring of methods as narrative methods influenced by Ricoeur used rather than phenomenological method. This appears, therefore, to be an example of narrative research.
4. Explanation of why phenomenology used and more detail re theoretical underpinning to the study. (see above)
5. This study also lends itself to IPA.. (Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis) why was IPA not chosen?
6. why 'narrative' interviews? in-depth unstructured interviews usually used in phenomenological research. (see above)
7. what phenomenological method of analysis used? what theory influenced analysis?
8. add profile of study participants
9. add so what? in conclusions. What are the implications for policy, practice and further research.
10. Limitations of method need adding to discussion.
11. A further limitation is that the participants did not use the terms existential uncertainty and certainty.
12. More could be made of showing how the longitudinal serial interviews enhanced the findings. This should be more clear in the findings section.

Minor Essential Revisions

13. Some grammatical, spelling and typographic errors needing attention.
**Level of interest:** An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

**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’