Author's response to reviews

Title: Care Planning Needs of Palliative Home Care Clients Based on the interRAI Palliative Care (interRAI PC) Assessment Clinical Assessment Protocols (CAPs)

Authors:

Shannon Freeman (shannon.freeman@unbc.ca)
John P Hirdes (hirdes@uwaterloo.ca)
Paul Stolee (stolee@uwaterloo.ca)
John Garcia (jmgarcia@uwaterloo.ca)
Trevor Frise Smith (trevors@nipissingu.ca)
Knight Steel (knightrsteel@yahoo.com)
John Morris (jnm@hsl.harvard.edu)

Version: 3
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Author's response to reviews: see over
Author’s response to reviews
Title: Care Planning Needs of Palliative Home Care Clients Based on the interRAI Palliative Care (interRAI PC) Assessment Clinical Assessment Protocols (CAPs)
Authors: Shannon Freeman John P Hirdes Paul Stolee John Garcia Trevor Frise Smith Knight Steel and John Morris
Version: 3 Date: 17 October 2014

Reviewer's report
Title: Care Planning Needs of Palliative Home Care Clients Based on the interRAI Palliative Care (interRAI PC) Assessment Clinical Assessment Protocols (CAPs)
Version: 2 Date: 17 September 2014
Reviewer: JUN HAMANO

Reviewer's report:
This article presents the interRAI PC CAP development process and provide an overview of the person and collective distributional properties of the eight interRAI PC CAPs. While the insights from the study are useful, there remain two points that must be clarified.

Major Compulsory Revisions
1. How estimated life expectancy (in line 222-224)
   We have adjusted the phrase life expectancy to estimated prognosis (lines 267-269). Prognosis in the interRAI PC is an estimation of the expected remaining length of life. To determine prognosis, clinicians use information from the person, his/her family, caregivers and medical records. Clinicians are especially sensitive to the person specific context and use their clinical best judgment to assess all available information. This is noted the lines 209-211.

2. Is there any correlation between actual survival period and each CAP. The authors revealed the prevalence of some CAP are increased as the estimated prognosis was shorter. But, there would be some relation between CAP and estimated prognosis. Therefore it would be useful to investigate the correlation actual survival period and each CAP.
   We agree with the review that it is very useful to investigate this correlation. However, at this point in time we do not have the actual death data of the client’s so we are unable to examine this point further.

3. In "Discussion" section, there are much detail of result. It could be shorten and simplified to focus on the discussion.
   We appreciate this suggestion however we feel that with the other revisions in the manuscript that the discussion section is an appropriate length.

4. In line 433-435, the author noted "Patterns in CAP triggering suggest increased attention should be given to address the increasingly complex needs of vulnerable populations such as older adults and persons with a limited prognosis”. But, in this study, the author assess
the estimated prognosis, not the actual survival time. Therefore, it is inconsequential to associate patterns in CAP triggering with a limited prognosis. We have revised the sentence accordingly (line 515).

**Level of interest:** An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

**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

**Reviewer's report**

**Title:** Care Planning Needs of Palliative Home Care Clients Based on the interRAI Palliative Care (interRAI PC) Assessment Clinical Assessment Protocols (CAPs)

**Version:** 2  **Date:** 17 September 2014

**Reviewer:** Kirsten Hermans

**Reviewer's report:**

I believe this is a carefully written and useful paper on:
1) the person-specific needs of palliative home care clients, based on the interRAI Palliative Care Clinical Assessment protocols (interRAI PC CAPs)
2) the development of the interRAI PC CAPs and the strengths and limitations of these CAPs

The authors provide a good explanation on the interRAI PC instrument and the interRAI PC CAPs.

Methods are appropriate and clearly described. Results, tables and figures are well presented and the discussion section is well balanced and adequately supported.

I would consider the paper ready for publication after making a few changes:

1) Lines 3-5: The title doesn’t seem to capture the whole content of the paper since it only refers to the care planning needs of the palliative home care clients, based on the interRAI PC. In the paper, the development process, the strengths and weaknesses of the interRAI PC CAPs are also described and put forward as the added value of the article. Therefore, I would also mention the development process of the CAPs in the title. [minor essential revision]

We have revised the title accordingly.

2) Line 113: The large group of interRAI instruments is mentioned. I think it would be interesting for the readers if a brief explanation about on these instruments was provided. [discretionary revision]

We have added some descriptions and additional references. See lines 124-127 and 137-140.
3) Introduction: Although the article is about care planning needs of palliative home care clients (which the title suggests), this population is not mentioned or described in the introduction. The relevance of studying this population’s palliative care needs is also not mentioned. Furthermore, while the title suggests that the main aim of the study is to examine the care planning needs of palliative home care clients, I think it would be recommended to mention this aim in the introduction and in the abstract. [minor essential revision]
We have added additional information to the abstract (see lines 83) and to the introduction see lines 112-120.

4) Limitations: I couldn’t find an overview of the limitations [minor essential revision]
We have added a section on specific limitations (see lines 486-497).

**Level of interest:** An article of outstanding merit and interest in its field

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

**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