Reviewer's report

Title: Assessment of knowledge, attitude and practice and associated factors towards palliative care among nurses working in selected hospitals, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Version: 1 Date: 7 February 2013

Reviewer: Judith Paice

Reviewer’s report:

The manuscript describing the knowledge and attitudes of nurses towards palliative care in Addis Ababa is an important contribution to our understanding of healthcare professionals’ perceptions of care for those with life-threatening illnesses. This is particularly important as palliative care is just beginning in Ethiopia. The sample size is large and incorporates the views of nurses from several diverse institutions. Several measures would further strengthen this paper:

Major compulsory revisions:

1. Abstract: The authors describe poor practice, yet the study did not measure practice. The study measured nurses’ reports of their practice and this is slightly different.

2. Background: This is a nice review of palliative care in Africa. The paragraph about Hospice Ethiopia seems misplaced and is only one sentence. Consider integrating this into another chapter or deleting the sentence. The last paragraph focuses on the need for research in palliative care, yet that is not the focus of this paper. This paper addresses knowledge and attitudes of nurses.

3. Material and Methods: The first paragraph (except for the first sentence about the cross-sectional study) should be moved to the last section of the Background as it is an explanation of services in Addis Ababa. Delete the subsections titled “Source Population” and “Study Population” – this is reflected in the section titled “Study Subjects” which could be retitled simply “Subjects”. The inclusion and exclusion criteria would be sentences in that paragraph rather than a separate section.

a. Under Sampling Technique the list of variables can be deleted.

b. The section titled Pre-Test can be move to Instruments (currently called Data Collection Instruments and Technique). Please describe if any validity testing was conducted on the modified version of the instruments.

4. Results: The first paragraph repeats what is included in Table 1. Just provide the highlights or most important findings in the text. This is true also for the discussion of nurses’ attitudes and table 3, as well as nursing practice and figure 3.

5. Discussion: An important finding is the difference between governmental and
nongovernmental hospitals. This might be included in the abstract.

6. Conclusion: The statement that “This study also shows training deficits have a measurable effect on PC” is not supported. The study did not evaluate the actual care delivered but rather, the nurses’ perspectives or reports of their practice.

7. References: Citations need to be revised to follow journal guidelines.

8. Table 3; include a legend describing the meaning of SD, D, U, A and SA.

9. Tables 5 and 6 could be summarized in the text. There are too many tables.

10. Figure 1: the meaning of this table is not clear.

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

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

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

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare I have no competing interests.