Author's response to reviews

Title: Factors associated with multiple transitions in care during the end of life following enrollment in a comprehensive palliative care program

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Author's response to reviews: see over
Re: Factors associated with multiple transitions in care during the end of life following enrollment in a comprehensive palliative care program (man_id=1182750610903534)

Please find attached our revised manuscript entitled as above. Below we have copied in bold each request to be included in the final version and follow it by how each has been addressed. Changes in the manuscript are referred to by Section heading, page, paragraph and if applicable, line numbers.

Thank you for accepting (in principle) our manuscript for publication in BMC Palliative Care.

Yours sincerely,

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Areas requiring attention

1. It has come to our attention that Table 1 is a reproduction of a table that was included in your previous article also published in BMC Palliative Care, and listed as reference 6. Given that the data reported on that table have already been published, we urge you to remove this table from the current manuscript, and refer to those data by including a citation to your previous article.

Yes, as noted previously, Table 1 is the same as one included in a previous BMC article which focused on this same subjects. For this revised article, we have removed Table 1: Patient characteristics and refer to it in the text with a citation to the previous article. “A table of relevant
patient characteristics may be found in a previously published article [6].” Results section, page 10, paragraph 1, last line.

2. … we would also request that you go through the manuscript formatting checklist one more time and ensure that your revised manuscript conforms to all of the points.

Done. Hopefully all points now conform.

3. Methods- Please document on the Methods section the details of the review board that granted ethical approval for the study, or the circumstances under which this was exempt from the need of ethical approval.

We’re not quite sure what additional information is being requested since the original manuscript did include a line that the Capital District Health Authority proved ethical approval for this study at the end of the Methods, Data section. However, given your request, it is obvious that this is not enough or perhaps not in the best location for reviewers to find.

We therefore moved the reference to ethical approval to just under the Methods heading, page 6, second paragraph and expand it somewhat by noting patient information analyzed was provided anonymously. “The research ethics board of the Nova Scotia Capital District Health Authority, Halifax, Nova Scotia provided ethical approval for this research. Personal identifying information was not included on the records used for this project. All patient information available was provided anonymously to preserve confidentiality.”

4. Competing interests- If there are none to declare, please write 'The authors declare that they have no competing interests'.

None to declare. Added “The authors declare that they have no competing interests”. Section Competing Interests, page 18.