Reviewer's report

Title: Palliative home care for cancer patients - Bereaved relatives' experience. A qualitative group interview study

Version: 1 Date: 11 September 2007

Reviewer: Mitsunori Miyashita

Reviewer's report:

General comments

Thank you for the opportunity to review your article. This paper describes the nature of home care experienced by bereaved relatives in Denmark using a qualitative method. Evaluations of palliative care by bereaved family members are very important. The authors addressed this topic using a focus interview method. I believe that the findings of this study would contribute to the progress home palliative care in Denmark and I hope that the authors intend to pursue further studies based on present findings. However, I have some comments.

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Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)

1. I recommend that the term “GPs” be included in the Title.

2. The Introduction section should include more articles regarding home palliative care and bereaved family surveys to clarify the relevance of this article to palliative care research worldwide.

3. Please provide more detailed information in the Methods section about the Danish palliative care system, especially the role of home care and the environment of death. In addition, a comment regarding palliative care education for GPs should be included.

4. The theme of the group discussion presented by the interviewer should be described more precisely in the Methods section.

5. The subsection title in the Discussion section is unnecessary.

6. The novel findings of this study should be more emphasized in the first paragraph of the Discussion section.

7. The authors concluded in the Discussion section that the reason for the low appraisal of GPs stemmed from participants wishing to describe negative experiences. However, in the country where I live, bereaved family members who have experienced positive end-of-life care are more likely to want to be recruited for such a study. However, the participants in the present study pointed out that the GPs provided a low quality of care. This might be because Danish GPs in fact do provide low quality care. Thus, the conclusion might be misleading. I recommend that you reconsider the conclusion taking into account the actual
situation in Denmark. For example, the theme of the group discussion might affect the comments of participants, and so should be described clearly.

8. Why did the authors perform group and not in-depth individual interviews? The merits and limitation of focus group interviews should be discussed.

9. The implications and future desirable actions should be more precisely and concretely described based on the findings of this study.

10. Cultural issues such as “professionalization” in Denmark should be more precisely described as this would an interesting topic for readers from other countries.

**What next?:** Unable to decide on acceptance or rejection until the authors have responded to the major compulsory revisions

**Level of interest:** An article of limited interest

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

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