Reviewer's report

**Title:** Implementing advance care planning: a qualitative study of community nurses' views and experiences

**Version:** 1 **Date:** 17 March 2010

**Reviewer:** Dick L Willems

**Reviewer's report:**

1. Is the question posed by the authors well defined?
   Yes it is. It is clearly about community nurses' views on (their role in) advance care planning, about obstacles and facilitators they experience in implementing ACP and about their educational needs.

2. Are the methods appropriate and well described?
   This is clearly a set of questions that asks for an qualitative approach such as the one the chose and described. Focus groups seem a valid approach here.

3. Are the data sound?
   They interview fragments are convincing; there are enough of them in the paper to make me trust the data collection and the conclusions the authors derive from them.

4. Does the manuscript adhere to the relevant standards for reporting and data deposition?
   I feel it does, although I sometimes had the feeling that it could be shortened without loss of information. This applies especially to the two first sections in the results. On the other hand, I felt that the issue of timing, which seems crucial to the use of ACP, could have been developed more. Particularly because it seems the main difference between physicians and nurses. So how do nurses deal with the problem of timing, when do they start ACP conversations and how?

5. Are the discussion and conclusions well balanced and adequately supported by the data?
   Yes they do. I think the discussion on the risk of bureaucratization of the ACP process is particularly welcome.

6. Are limitations of the work clearly stated?
   The authors are very celar about the small number of participants and the fact that the findings cannot be generalized.

7. Do the authors clearly acknowledge any work upon which they are building, both published and unpublished?
   To my view, they do.
8. Do the title and abstract accurately convey what has been found?
Yes.

9. Is the writing acceptable?
As far as I can judge (not being a native English speaker), it is.

- Discretionary Revisions
This is a well-written article on an important issue, not only within the British context; not only for the nursing profession, but also for GP’s. I think it is especially commendable that the authors performed this study in the context of community care – most of these studies (at least those I am aware of) are done in institutional settings.
As mentioned in the comments above, the paper could be shortened at some points, but on the other hand I would like some more data on the way nurses deal with the timing problem.

Level of interest: An article of importance 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.