Reviewer's report

Title: Destined to die in hospital? Systematic review and meta-analysis of place of death in haematological malignancy.

Version: 1 Date: 25 February 2010

Reviewer: Lieve Van den Block

Reviewer's report:

Major Compulsory Revisions

Although the study of place of death is an important one, even within specific subgroups of patients, I unfortunately have two major issues with this paper:

1) The study aims to be a systematic review and meta-analysis, but there seems to be an important problem with the search criteria used. Important papers in Europe are missing such as:


In both papers haematological malignancies are studied.

The search string used in the study is not made explicit in the method section of the paper, but will most definitively not be precise enough.

2) The paper is very limited in scope ie estimating the odds of dying in a hospital. A review and accompanying analysis of the factors associated with dying in a hospital or at home would make the paper much stronger. The authors now elaborate on this issue extensively in the discussion section, but this without making it a separate research question and analyzing the literature. The limited data provided now makes the paper most suited for a short research letter, not a full paper.

- Minor Essential Revisions

1) Why is age < 18? There is no obvious reason to limit this, on the contrary.

Level of interest: An article of limited interest

Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being published
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