Reviewer’s report

Title: The ethical decisions UK doctors make regarding advanced cancer patients at the end of life - the perceived (in) appropriateness of anticoagulation for venous thromboembolism: A qualitative study

Version: 2 Date: 13 August 2012

Reviewer: Suzanne Kosmider

Reviewer’s report:

The authors have addressed the concerns/comments raised by the 3 reviewers adequately.

I feel the discussion would be enhanced if the authors include (as they did in the response to the reviewers) a section regarding ambiguity around the "end of life definition" and why this was not defined in their study questionnaire.

As per the response to reviewers:

The term "end of life" was deliberately not concretely defined during the interviews to allow for doctors to discuss their own decision making with reference to patients on this spectrum of advanced disease. We believe this approach has borne rich data about the ambiguity in clinical decision making for this patient group and we did not use a formal measure of performance status as that is not usual routine clinical practice in the UK across all settings.

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

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’