Reviewer's report

Title: Attitudes towards neonatal euthanasia of the general Austrian population: a survey

Version: Date: 10 June 2014

Reviewer: Georg Kemmler

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Major Compulsory Reviews

1. Methods, p. 5, first paragraph: Did the authors check the representativeness of their sample, e.g., by comparison with census data of the national statistical office (Statistik Austria)?

2. Methods, p. 6: Attitudes towards NE are assessed by one single question only. As the assessment of lay persons’ attitudes to NE is the main goal of the study, this is quite a “minimalistic” approach. One would usually expect that the topic of foremost interest is covered by more items, both for psychometric and scientific reasons. Why did the authors decide to be so sparingly with items on attitudes to NE? Please comment and also mention this as a limitation of the study!

3. Results, p. 7-8: The authors provide two analyses, a univariate one using Chi-square tests (1) and a multiple logistic regression analysis (2). Which of the two should the reader “believe” in? E.g., political orientation emerged as a significant predictor in analysis 1 (“right” was associated with higher NE approval rates), but not in analysis 2. Is political orientation important for a person’s attitude towards NE or not?

4. Discussion, p. 11 first paragraph: Withdrawal of care is quite a sensitive issue. It would be useful if the authors could give a reference (or several) for this.

Minor Essential Revisions

5. Introduction, p. 4, last paragraph: The authors state that very little is known of the attitudes towards neonatal euthanasia (NE) in the general public. However, the two articles cited in the paragraph before (Teisserey et al.) do deal with attitudes towards NEs in lay persons. This should come out more clearly.

6. Methods, Data analysis, p. 6, last paragraph: The first sentence of this subsection sounds unnecessarily complicated, please simplify! Also please state more exactly how the backward regression procedure worked. The authors wrote that variables with a p # 0.1 (lower or equal) were excluded, which is probably a typo! Moreover, as significance was defined as p # 0.05, what happened with predictors with a p-value between 0.05 and 0.1?

7. Results, p. 7: This section should begin with a short description of the sample.
While Table 1 provides this to some extent, it would be helpful for the reader to have some basic information about the sample distribution (socio-demographics) in the text.

8. Table 2: The column with the p-values should be moved to the right-most column of the table.

**Level of interest:** An article of importance in its field

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

**Statistical review:** Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

No competing interests.