Reviewer's report

Title: Ethical challenges related to elder care. High level decision-makers experiences

Version: 3 Date: 18 December 2006

Reviewer: Samia Hurst

Reviewer's report:

General
The authors have strengthened the paper and clarified several important points. There are still a few minor issues, which I think ought to be integrated.

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

1) I still do not understand the subject sampling technique. It was previously described as "random", and has now been changed to "names were drawn". How is this different from random sampling? I should perhaps stress that, although the authors correctly note that random sampling is not ideal for qualitative research, I would not consider it a fatal flaw if subjects had indeed been selected in a random manner. It could, I think, be defended as long as saturation had been reached in the analysis for the presented results. This appears to have been so, but it would merit a point of clarification as readers may otherwise remain puzzled regarding the validity of this method.

2) Regarding the distinction between action ethics and relational ethics, the authors do a good job of clarifying their terms. However, as they state that their respondents did not make this distinction, simply stating that the authors chose to make it anyway seems rather arbitrary. If, as I am confident is the case, they had a good reason to do so, they should make this reason explicit in the text.

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Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)

1) As the authors correctly note, the term "justness" is correct English. However, it is still not straightforward even for good English-speakers. I think a few words to clarify the meaning of this term would be useful to both anglophone and non-anglophone readers.

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Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

What next?: Accept after minor essential revisions

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.