Reviewer's report

Title: The consoling Power of Presence: Hospice Nurses' lived Experience with Spiritual and Existential Care for the Dying - a phenomenological-hermeneutical Study

Version: 2 Date: 14 July 2014

Reviewer: Daniela d'angelo

Reviewer's report:

This is an interesting and relevant research paper which represents an important area of work looking at how nurses experience with alleviating spiritual and existential suffering.

It is a good work, I only have a few suggestions.

Minor essential Revisions

- Abstract. the term illuminate, I am not sure that this term fits well with the essence of the message. I am wondering if the author’s choice of this term is due to the method of analysis (Ricoeurs’ philosophy) or to something else.

I consider there are too many repetitions between the abstract (lines 6 -11), the aim (lines 64-65), and the background section(lines 56-61).

Considering that the conclusion section represents a “concentration” of knowledge emerged from the study, I would remove any reference. Similarly I would remove the nurse’s phrase, rather for example I would include which factors may hamper/facilitate the consoling and sensing process.

- I would have liked to see the background section developed more fully, in a way in which the reader are more prepared to be aware of the difficulty theme such as "being with" "the only tool you have is yourself."

- Could the authors put the themes emerged (through the critical comprehension) in the discussion section in a table? For example, those by Back et al “compassionate silence”, Norberg et al’s “uncovering the wound, and Milleret al’s”wounded healers”.

Themes Subthemes Critical comprehension

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'