Author's response to reviews

Title: Can a theory-based educational intervention change nurses' knowledge and attitudes concerning cancer pain management? A quasi-experimental design

Authors:

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Author's response to reviews: see over
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Response to Reviewers

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We thank the reviewers for their helpful comments.

Author’s response shown in bold italics

Reviewer 1:
Claire A Hale

Comment 1: The authors need to say if the participants in the control group got any kind of intervention (which is not unusual in trials) or if they got absolutely nothing other than the questionnaires to complete.

We have now clarified this under the section: Participants and study setting (p.6)

Comment 2: This intervention is billed as a 'theory based' intervention - yet the intervention involves a change in the ward routine to include the introduction of VAS for daily pain assessment. To me this latter sounds like a practical intervention and not a theory based intervention. I think that the authors need to clarify what they mean by a 'theory based intervention' in a way that includes the introduction of the VAS pain assessment tool.

We have now clarified this under the section: The theory-based educational intervention (p.8)

Comment 3: Given the high drop out rate, which the authors acknowledge and which particularly meant that analysis at T3 could not be carried out, I think that the authors could be accused of overemphasising the significance of their findings. The high drop out rate means that at T2 the study is seriously underpowered (the power analysis advised 12 in each group) and therefore the significant p-values should be treated with a bit more caution - and this should be reflected in the abstract of the paper.

We have now clarified this in the abstract (p.2-3).
Comment 4: In Table 3 the statistical test used to assess level of significance should be inserted at the foot of the table.

We have now inserted information about the performed statistical test at the foot of table 3 (p.27).

Reviewer: 2
Margaret Fitch

Thank you for your comments they are much appreciated.