Reviewer’s report

Title: Palliative patients under anaesthesiological care: A single-centre retrospective study on incidence, demographics and outcome

Version: 1 Date: 3 April 2015

Reviewer: Savino Spadaro

Reviewer’s report:

Thank you for sharing your work. The study was performed to assess the incidence, demographics, and outcome of palliative patients under anesthesiological care.

The authors analyzed a range of symptoms needing the attention of anaesthesiologists. I read with interest the article but I’m not able at expressing an opinion while recognizing the importance of the management of palliative patients. I think that the topic proposed by authors is innovative and interesting.

The study is focused on the management of palliative patients but it is not in line with aims of the study. I believe that the reader could not easily understand the meaning of the study. I suggest to the authors an important effort in revising the work before reviewing the work again.

Furthermore the authors should be reconsider these major points:

1. The sentence reported at Line 11-13 page 3 “Management of palliative patients in the anaesthesiologist’s primary workplace, the operating room, has not been in the focus of the literature” is in contrast with this “Only few articles describe the perioperative medical management of palliative patients”.

2. At line 11 page 4 reported: “In patients with multiple procedures, each procedure was counted as a new patient…” how many patients? so if a patient has undergone three operations it is considered as three cases? Please clarify this important aspect!

3. In table 3 reported among the procedure “cardio Pulmonary resuscitation”. I do not understand what may be the variables considered. Please explain this point. I believe that this procedure should not be considered but if you feel appropriate please comments in discussion

4. The study is focused on the management of palliative patients but what was the treatment of the symptoms investigated? how many were resolved? data presented are very general and not specific. Please give more details. Eg. if the patient has had a “symptom psychosocial” (4% reported in table 4) how he was treated by anaesthesiologist?

5. 27.1% of patients undergoing emergency procedures should be a subgroup analysis of survival. I believe that survival analysis for this population should be considered separately. how many of these patients had an ICU stay?
Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

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

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

Declaration of competing interests: i have no competing interests