Reviewer’s report

Title: THE COMMUNICATION BETWEEN PATIENT RELATIVES AND PHYSICIANS IN INTENSIVE CARE UNITS

Version: 0 Date: 08 Jun 2017

Reviewer: Karsten Bartels

Reviewer's report:

Faruk Cicekci and colleagues present results of a multi center survey regarding the communication process between patient relatives and physicians in the ICU. Specifically, they present results regarding the categories: "according to the informing, empathy and trust sub dimensions": The authors demonstrate expectations and substance of messages in the informing, empathy and trust sub-dimensions of the communication process between patient relatives and physicians in the ICU.

This is an important topic and the study was thoroughly planned and conducted. The comments below are intended to improve the manuscript.

There are multiple grammatical errors throughout the manuscript, which make it hard to read. Consider having this manuscript edited by a native speaker scientist, or consider using a language editing service such as:

American Journal Experts
Bio Science Writers
Boston BioEdit
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The Medical Editor

The development and validation of the survey is very well explained. This is appreciated. Please consult the following article to further describe the survey instrument and the reporting of your

You note in the section "Availability of data and materials:
The questionnaire forms supporting the conclusion of this article is available from the corresponding author on reasonable request."

This is unsatisfactory this day in age. Please make all materials available, e.g. at a site such as: Dryad Digital Repository (http://datadryad.org), or similar (e.g. https://qdr.syr.edu).

A clearly articulated hypothesis in the introduction would be appreciated.

The introduction is poorly referenced. E.g. almost every sentence in the section quoted below could deserve a citation:

"Communication is based on source, message and receiver. The communication source is usually the physician in the health units such as intensive care units, interview between the patient's relatives and the physician is the message, and the patients' relatives is the recipient. In order to get proper function of the communication process, the physician and the patients' relative must give the same meaning to the message. It is known that attitudes are the driving forces behind behavior, and also attitudes can be defined as the likely behavior that an individual is expected to put forth in the face of a situation, event or phenomenon. It also expresses the similarities between individual attitudes and behavioral aspects."

Table 5 "Chest diseases" - would this be considered a pulmonologist?

The discussion is too long in my humble opinion. The section "Suggestions for a successful communication between patient relatives and physicians" is well-intended, yet not backed up by the data you present at every juncture. I would suggest to tighten up the discussion, focus on your results in context what others have found, and limit speculation of the impact of your results to a minimum.

Your conclusion "The researchers believe that the communication between patient relatives and physicians can be strengthened through a variety of training programs to improve communication skills." is not backed up by your data. Did you investigate if ICU physicians took certain classes that can help develop these skills. If not, are there any? If yes, is there data to support that such classes work? This could be a focus of your discussion in regards to next steps.
Are the methods appropriate and well described?
If not, please specify what is required in your comments to the authors.

Yes

Does the work include the necessary controls?
If not, please specify which controls are required in your comments to the authors.

Yes

Are the conclusions drawn adequately supported by the data shown?
If not, please explain in your comments to the authors.

No

Are you able to assess any statistics in the manuscript or would you recommend an additional statistical review?
If an additional statistical review is recommended, please specify what aspects require further assessment in your comments to the editors.

I am able to assess the statistics

Quality of written English
Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

Not suitable for publication unless extensively edited

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