Reviewer’s report

Title: Intensive procedure preferences at the end of life (EOL) in older Latino adults with End Stage Renal Disease (ESRD) on dialysis

Version: 0 Date: 13 Jul 2017

Reviewer: Rachel Patzer

Reviewer's report:
The purpose of this exploratory mixed methods study by Gonzalez et al was to describe preferences of end of life intensive procedures among older Latino adults with and without end stage renal disease using one-on-one interviews and focus groups. The authors identified several themes, including preferences for limiting suffering at end of life, decreasing family burden, and some mistrust of physicians in making end of life decisions. The results are important preliminary findings that could influence healthcare providers.

STRENGTHS
- This manuscript fills a gap by examining end of life (EOL) decisions among an understudied demographic group, Latino/Hispanic Americans living with ESRD.
- The mixed methods approach allows a narrative description of EOL decisions, preferences and attitudes that may not have been easily identifiable with the sole use of quantitative data analysis.
- A mixed methods research design was appropriate since there may be limited psychometrically sound instruments and measures that can accurately assess EOL preferences among this specific ethnic population.
- The 2 populations, ESRD group and non-ESRD group, offers an opportunity to compare the preferences and attitudes regarding EOL. However, the authors should briefly state, perhaps in the Intro, the significance/importance of examining (comparing and contrasting) these two groups.
WEAKNESSES

- The researchers use focus group interviewing for the non-ESRD sample and semi-structured interviewing for the ESRD sample. Though these are both qualitative methods, there are a few differences in focus group interviewing and semi-structured interviewing. Focus groups can change dynamics of interviews whereas semi-structured one-on-one interviewing allows more of an in-depth, substantive discussion because the focus is on the interviewee and not the total group. In focus groups, active moderation is needed because the topic can sometimes vary from the original topic and focus groups are often subject to bias due to the group dynamics or discomfort in discussing a sensitive topic like EOL. The methods can't be changed as of now, but it is important that the authors briefly discuss the variation in the qualitative methods as a study limitation.

- There is no mention of duration of interviews. Authors should provide mean length for focus group interviews and individual interviews in the Results section.

- The focus groups are drawn from two different populations (church and senior center) but there is no mention if these two non-ESRD Latino population are comparable (in terms of socioeconomic status and other relevant demographic characteristics). There is slight mention of this in the results section but this needs to be stated in the research design.

- Same comment above for the dialysis groups which were drawn from 2 different dialysis centers.

- The reviewer suggests the authors re-word the sentence "Our study focused on Spanish speaking older Latino adults and we did not include Latino adults whose primary language was English" (p. 14) to say the majority of the sample preferred to communicate in Spanish (as stated in Table 2) particularly since the inclusion criteria was Spanish and English speaking adults. The inclusion criterion was not Spanish as a 1st or primary language.

- Authors should briefly mention how they drafted and finalized the guiding questions for interviews and focus group.
Table titles - would be helpful to have more complete/descriptive titles for the tables. For example, Table 2: Participant characteristics could be expanded to include information about the study population (e.g. among non-ESRD and Dialysis patients), the year of study, and the method of obtaining the information (Survey)

**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.
Yes

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

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