Reviewer’s report

Title: Identifying the need for specialized palliative care in adult cancer patients – Development and validation of a screening procedure based on proxy assessment by physicians and filter questions

Version: 0 Date: 12 Apr 2019

Reviewer: Research Square

Reviewer's report:

"STATISTICAL REVIEWER ASSESSMENT:

Is the study design appropriate for the research question (considering whether the analyzed population accurately reflects the design and whether you see any problems with control/comparison groups, e.g., likely confounders)?

No - there are minor issues

Are methodologies adequate and well implemented (considering whether assumptions are addressed and whether analyses are robust)?

Yes - methodologies are adequate and well implemented, assumptions are addressed, analysis is robust

Are the analyses adequately communicated (considering whether reporting details are adequate and whether figures and tables are well labeled and described)?

Yes - important reporting details are present, analyses are adequately communicated, figures and tables are well labeled and described

Does the interpretation accurately reflect the analyses without overstatement (considering whether limitations/bias are acknowledged and whether accurate descriptors, e.g., 'significant', are used)?

Yes - interpretation accurately reflects analyses, limitations/bias are acknowledged, accurate descriptors are used
Could an appropriately REVISED version of this work represent a statistically sound contribution?

Yes - current version has sound statistics

STATISTICAL REVIEWER COMMENTS:

Abstract
The conclusion needs to be expanded.

Introduction
Please divide the long paragraph at the bottom of page 3, line 48 and extends to page 4, line 54.

Methods
How did you decide on the disciplines to include as part of the multidisciplinary team?

Please provide additional details on data collection by the research team (e.g., how many times were patients contacted, what was the frequency of study reminders etc.)

Results
Please provide rationale why Cohen's kappa was calculated for 100 patients (page 11, line 45)

Discussion
I would ask the authors to discuss the exclusion of 27.4% in the validity analysis? Is there literature to support excluding nearly a third of the sample?

REQUESTED REVISIONS:
Overall, the study is well written and organized. The statistical analyzes is appropriate and clearly presented in the paper. The psychometric testing of the outcome measure is appropriate. 
Are the methods appropriate and well described?
If not, please specify what is required in your comments to the authors.

No

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

No

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

Yes

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:

Acceptable

Declaration of competing interests
Please complete a declaration of competing interests, considering the following questions:

1. Have you in the past five years received reimbursements, fees, funding, or salary from an organisation that may in any way gain or lose financially from the publication of this manuscript, either now or in the future?

2. Do you hold any stocks or shares in an organisation that may in any way gain or lose financially from the publication of this manuscript, either now or in the future?

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5. Do you have any other financial competing interests?

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If you can answer no to all of the above, write 'I declare that I have no competing interests' below. If your reply is yes to any, please give details below.

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