**Reviewer’s report**

**Title:** Family caregiver mistreatment of the elderly. Prevalence of risk and associated factors in a Spanish population

**Version:** 0  **Date:** 02 Aug 2017

**Reviewer:** David Burnes

**Reviewer’s report:**

The current study examined the prevalence and risk factors of caregiver elder abuse in a community-based sample characterized by scenarios involving highly dependent care recipients. Elder abuse involving caregivers is a critical scenario within the elder abuse literature, and the current study represents a nice contribution. The current study involves a large sample and use of validated measures for most independent variables, as well as the key dependent abuse variable. Despite the strengths and contribution that this study makes to the literature, there are several issues to address as follows:

**Abstract**

1) Line 50: "self-reported abuse from the care recipient" comes across as reflecting abuse experienced by the recipient, as opposed to recipient-to-caregiver abuse as perceived by the caregiver.

**Background and Introduction**

1) "Serious loss of dignity and respect" is not typically considered a subtype of elder abuse. Authors should restrict to the five main elder abuse subtypes, as recognized by the WHO and U.S. National Research Council.

2) Line 63: Should insert the word "hospitalization" before "admissions"

3) Please note that the description of elder abuse on lines 65/66 is incorrect. Authors should defer to an accepted definition of elder abuse as provided by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2016) or the U.S. National Research Council (2003). For example, by definition, elder abuse is limited to relationships involving an expectation of trust and is not viewed as perpetrated by society in general.

4) Including "effective interventions" on line 70 seems redundant

5) Should include the phrase "excluding financial abuse" following the "4.6%" research finding on line 76.
6) On line 86, do the authors mean "ecological systems model"?

7) The passage justifying use of the CASE tool on lines 97 to 101 seems better suited for the methods section

8) Can delete "scale of" on line 105

Methods

1) Lines 138/139: This question comes across as reflecting instrumental support, specifically, as opposed to social support in general. Is there a reference that supports its use as a proxy for general social support? Authors should consider re-naming this variable to reflect the construct more accurately.

2) The sentence that begins paragraph on line 107 comes across as more of a bullet point than a full sentence.

3) Line 110: It would be helpful to provide a brief description of what is meant by "Primary Care Teams" to give a sense of the recruitment setting and potential participant bias.

4) Line 113: How are you defining dependency? This needs to be clarified given its importance to inclusion criteria.

5) Line 129: Need a reference for the suggested cut-off point.

6) Lines 147/148: We need more information about what this ad hoc five-item questionnaire looks like (e.g., examples of specific questions) and how it was scored. If scored by summing the items, then a Cronbach's Alpha statistic should be provided.

7) Analysis should include whether or not the care recipient and caregiver live together as an independent variable predicting mistreatment - a shared living arrangement is considered to be an important risk factor for elder mistreatment.

8) The field of elder abuse has moved toward analysis of separate elder abuse subtypes. In addition to having a final model for abuse in general, analyses should be presented for final separate models of physical abuse, emotional abuse, and neglect.

Discussion

1) Line 211: One more sentence is needed to interpret why this study population characterized by high levels of dependency, cognitive impairment and relatives is amenable to higher rates of abuse.
2) The passage on lines 213 to 219 was difficult to understand - it came across as choppy. Please revise for greater coherence.

3) Lines 244 to 250: Further interpretation is required to help understand how greater burden, anxiety and depression translate into higher likelihood of abusing/neglecting.

4) Lines 294 to 296: This passage was unexpected and not supported by study findings - authors should delete.

General

1) Authors should consider using the term elder mistreatment, which includes both abuse and neglect subtypes. The term abuse became confusing throughout paper in regard to whether it related to the global issue or a subtype.

2) In general, the paper should undergo further reviewing for typos, grammar, and consistency in regard to in-text referencing.

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

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 recommend additional statistical review

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