Reviewer's report

Title: "Taking Your Place at the Table": The Value of Chaplains as Integral Members of Interdisciplinary Research Teams

Version: 2 Date: 4 August 2014

Reviewer: Linda Emanuel

Reviewer's report:

General:
This is a well conceived, well written, original, and interesting study that makes a real contribution to the palliative care literature as well as the chaplaincy and research literature in general. It is long and could be shortened by quite a lot. Some writing points are noted that need correction.

Specific:
Abstract:
Background: This section is unclear.
Line 1: I think you mean ‘in transforming’ instead of ‘as it transforms’
Line 3: I think you mean ‘or’ instead of the first ‘and’ and ‘or about’ instead of the second ‘and’
Last two sentences: Reverse their order for a better flow.
Conclusions:
Second to last sentence: comma after ‘addition’
Last sentence: omit ‘also’
Background:
Para 1 last sentence: Copy edit…space
Methods:
This whole section is long.
Para 1 one but last sentence: omit after 20 years till comma or clarify that MS was providing supervision to chaplains in training. Better to omit.
Para 1 last sentence: omit or move these content areas till they are relevant? The reader gets hung up on why you came up with these as the three elements of core spiritual need and whether they are psychological etc.
Para 2: Copy edits: Symposium needs to be plural; double period at end of the same sentence.
Para 3. I think you don’t need the specific aims or Figure 1. Replace this with the content of Figure 2 which is relevant and necessary.
P9 quote: Put ‘meaning and direction in quotes for Chaplain 1 and Chaplain 2
quotes.
P10 line 2: Sounds like it also improved the chaplains understanding of psychology or psychiatry terms and diagnostic categories.
P13 quote first Chaplain 2 comment: ‘did’ should be capitalized.
P14 middle para: I was getting into the idea that research involvement helps crystallize professional models of care for the lead teaching chaplains and that made sense. But then I lost you here. Can you shorten and clarify this fifth point?
P21: Last para: Complete the point that chaplains are trained to care for all faiths and none and so are trained in spirituality in its largeness and in its overlap with the other spheres.

Level of interest: An article of outstanding merit and interest in its field

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

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare I have no conflict of interests