Reviewer's report

Title: What Do I Do? Developing a Taxonomy of Chaplaincy Activities and Interventions for Spiritual Care in Intensive Care Unit Palliative Care

Version: 3 Date: 13 January 2015

Reviewer: Joshua M Hauser

Reviewer's report:


This is a thorough and thoughtful paper that establishes a valuable taxonomy for palliative care work in the ICU and I recommend acceptance with minor revisions. Specific suggestions and comments are below.

Minor Essential Revisions

p. 4 – “data taken from unique patient recorded who had at least one interaction with a hospital chaplain” – what type of data?

p. 4 Focus groups – a little bit more detail on how focus groups were conducted – sounds like they assessed the items above but not clear how they narrowed them down, combined them, exclude them, etc.


p. 5 Self-observation section – daily observations – a little more detail about the types of activities that were included in the list.

p. 8 Self-observation section – “79% of the activities items were endorsed.” Not clear what endorsed means.

p. 9 – Content validity section – not clear how categorizations were coded as “congruent” or “incongruent”

p. 10 – The Taxonomy section – “As the taxonomy emerged, we tested a variety of patterns of how to group and assemble items to represent spiritual care interactions” – not clear how these patterns were tested.

p. 10 - The Taxonomy section – I think this and all that follows should be the “Discussion” section of the paper. Would also benefit from some reflection by the authors about how the specific topics of chaplaincy in the ICU is different than or the same as other domains of hospital chaplaincy.

p. 12 – need “Limitations” section – issues such as generalizability, etc.

Discretionary Revisions
“Chaplaincy needs a unified and consistent naming set for its actions….” Would change to “Chaplains need a unified and consistent naming set for their actions and activities in order to better portray to the inter-disciplinary medical team what goals and results they strive to achieve.”

“demographical” should be “demographic”

Should the “The Taxonomy’s intended effects and palliative care”

**Level of interest:** An article of importance in its field

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

**Statistical review:** No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

No competing interests