Reviewer’s report

Title: Palliative care professionals’ willingness to perform euthanasia or physician assisted suicide

Version: 0 Date: 06 Sep 2015

Reviewer: Freda Dekeyser Ganz

Reviewer’s report:

This is an interesting topic and worthy of publication however the manuscript needs some revision in my opinion.

In general, there are several unclear sections and in my opinion, the English needs to be further edited.

Abstract:

the last sentence is unclear

Background

-In your review of the literature you are missing a series of articles by Musgrave that dealt with scenarios on this topic using nurses from different clinical areas.

Methods:

- what was the original purpose of the Seale questionnaire?
- there is no discussion of the reliability and validity of the questionnaire
- I would suggest instead of doing a series of analyses that the authors consider doing 2 logistic regressions where the criterion variable is either willingness to perform euthanasia or PAS and the predictors are profession, qualification, and demographic variables

Results:

-the subsections are too short. Many can be combined into one section
- the last sentence of the results section is unclear
Limitations:

-the authors assume that the results do not reflect the general opinion of German physicians and nurses. How do they know that? I would say that the results might not reflect their opinions as the sample might be biased.

- I would also include that the scenarios used are limited. What about terminal patients with dementia or other diseases that are not cancer?

Discussion:

-the first sentence includes the term, "without biased idioms" I am not sure that I understand what that means

- the last sentence of the section on acceptance and willingness to act is unclear (p.12, lines 254-255)

-what is a "liberal attitude"?

- the sentence on page 13, line 277-280 is unclear

- the conclusion on page 14, lines 304-306 needs to be further explained

- I think that the conclusion on page 14, lines 314-316 goes beyond the data of the current study

- Is Germany the same or different from other countries in this area? This should be explored and incorporated into the background and discussion. Does German culture affect the results?

Table 1: I would delete this table and put it in the background section

Table 2: contains the questions but not the possible answers or the results of the study

- the translation for item 8 is unclear

Table 4: I would make its layout like table 3. Currently it is very hard to follow

Table 5: this table could also be laid out like table 3- items/questions to the left and the answers in clear columns on the right

-what about physicians that specialized in both palliative care and pain medicine?

**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.

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 am able to assess the statistics

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

Needs some language corrections before being published

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